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THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

PAGES FROM A NEGRO WORKER'S NOTEBOOK

JAMES BOGGS

Special 96-page issue

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CONTENTS

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and NUMBER FOUR AUGUST 1963

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION *by James Boggs*

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NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

It is with a profound sense of sorrow and loss that we record the death from cancer at the age of 46 of our good friend Dr. Abraham Mufson, on May 24th in New York City. Abe did not write for MR—he was too busy in his own field of dentistry for that—but hardly a month went by without our discussing with him the latest issue and what would or might go into the next, and through these discussions he played a part from the beginning in shaping the magazine's development. His wife, Aleine Austin Mufson, has been Treasurer of Monthly Review Associates since its founding and remains what she and Abe have always been, one of MR's closest friends and most valued collaborators. To her and the family we extend our love and sympathy.

The plan for this special double summer issue of MR originated nearly a year ago in a correspondence with James Boggs which was indirectly initiated by our friend W. H. Ferry. Little could we know then how timely its appearance would be in July of 1963. A year ago, talk about the Negroes as leaders of an American Revolution would have been dismissed, even by most MR readers, as irresponsible chatter. Today, we venture to believe, it will be taken very seriously indeed; and we do not hesitate to predict that a year from now it will be widely accepted by the Left, and even beyond, as the key to our national future. That this view is not already widely accepted is owing, we think, to a certain myopia which afflicts most Americans, including most radicals. They can see the Negro question only as a race question, not as a social question. They do not understand that the Negro struggle has its deepest roots in the most fundamental contradictions of the American social order and that it can achieve its aims only by eliminating these contradictions, which means by transforming the social order itself. One of the few who have as yet seen the problem clearly is the country's leading conservative thinker, Walter Lippmann. Writing in his column "Today and Tomorrow" (June 11), Lippmann recognizes that in the Negro struggle there is "already manifest a demand not only for legal equality and for equality of status in public places but for the substance of equality. . . . What the Negroes are now demanding are better schools, better housing, better jobs." But, Lippmann notes, "the country is in fact short of good schools, good housing and good

(*continued on inside back cover*)

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James Boggs

MONTHLY REVIEW PRESS *New York 1963*

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Editors' Foreword

The fact that we are devoting an entire double issue of MONTHLY REVIEW to one man's assessment of our present national condition does not mean that we agree with everything James Boggs has to say, any more than publication of his work in MR means that Mr. Boggs shares all the views of the editors. Our reason for publishing these pages is that we think Mr. Boggs has things to say that all Americans, and especially Americans of the Left, ought to listen to. He knows the American labor movement from the inside, and he knows the mood of working-class Negroes because he is one. When he speaks of the American Revolution, he is not using a figure of speech. He means it quite literally. In fact he thinks that the American Revolution has already begun. He also thinks that it will be a protracted, painful, violent process in which not only will Negroes clash with whites but Negroes will clash with Negroes and whites with whites. And there is no end in sight and will not be until Americans finally come to realize that their responsibility is nothing less than the building of a classless society capable of making use of the prodigious powers of modern technology for genuinely human ends. They will not come to this realization and assume this responsibility except to the extent that they purge themselves of the accumulated corruption not of years or decades but of centuries, and this can be achieved only through struggle, suffering, and sacrifice. To this, we can only say amen.

Where we tend to differ from Mr. Boggs is in his analysis of the economy. He looks at the current economic scene through the eyes of a production worker, and he sees clearly that he and his fellow production workers are a "vanishing herd," being made obsolete by rapidly advancing automation. He also knows that automation is invading other areas of the economy—

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the store, the office, the bank. He concludes that the United States today is headed not for the liberal utopia of full employment, but for full *un*employment. We must, he tells us, learn to build not only a classless society but also a workless society.

There is no doubt of the reality or the force of the trends which Mr. Boggs highlights in this analysis. What he neglects or underestimates is a certain counter-trend. As productive labor becomes ever more fruitful and less needed, the frantic search for profits drives the great corporations which dominate the American economy to create, directly and indirectly, other areas of employment—in salesmanship, entertainment, speculation (legal and illegal), personal service, and so on. Some of the jobs thus provided also succumb to automation, but the process of proliferation is not halted. To be sure, it is not rapid or vigorous enough to prevent the steady rise of unemployment, as the experience of the past eight years so convincingly shows. But it does brake the rise of unemployment. Mr. Boggs's concept of "full unemployment" is an enlightening exaggeration, but it can be misleading if it is taken too literally.

Do not misunderstand us. We see nothing healthy in the job trends just referred to. For the most part, the American economy creates new jobs through organizing waste which is at best harmless and at worst poisonous and destructive. Not only are millions of Americans unemployed today; more millions are engaged in basically anti-human activities (this is the aspect of our society which is so effectively exposed by Paul Goodman in his book *Growing Up Absurd*). The net effect is twofold: to add to the corruption which James Boggs rightly sees as our most basic problem, and to make it easier for the old illusions to live on a while longer. If we were really headed for full unemployment, the hour of truth could not be long postponed. As it is, who knows? The American Revolution may be more protracted, painful, and violent than even a man as perceptive, sensitive, and courageous as James Boggs is yet able to imagine.

Leo Huberman
Paul M. Sweezy

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Introduction

There are two sides to every question but only one side is right. I believe in democracy, but I don't believe in being too damn democratic. In other words, I believe that everyone has a right to his opinion, but I don't believe he has a right to be hypocritical or sly about it, and I believe that it is my responsibility to fight and right those opinions that are wrong.

People are not born with opinions. Their opinions are shaped by their environments and their teachers, and they can be shaped by the wrong environment and the wrong teachers. A baby is not born with hate, but a lot of babies in the United States are taught hate.

Those who have the most power can do the most shaping and the most teaching, and if they are teaching what I believe is wrong, then I believe their power should be taken away from them.

That is what I hope this book will help to achieve. I especially recommend it to the FBI and the CIA and all those who plan to save and secure the world on the false premise that the world can be made safe and secure by freezing the ideas and creativity of man.

I am a factory worker but I know more than just factory work. I know the difference between what would sound right if one lived in a society of logical people and what *is* right when you live in a society of real people with real differences. It may sound perfectly natural to a highly educated and logical person, even when he hears people saying that there is going to be a big riot, to assume that there will not be a big riot because the authorities have everything under control. But if *I* kept hearing people say that there was going to be a big riot and I saw one of these logical people standing in the middle, I

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would tell him he'd better get out of the way because he sure was going to get killed.

Reforms and revolutions are created by the illogical actions of people. Very few logical people ever make reforms and none make revolutions. Rights are what you make and what you take.

James Boggs

Detroit,
May 1, 1963

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CHAPTER 1

The Rise and Fall of the Union

In the last twenty years an industrial revolution has been taking place in the United States at a pace faster than that of any country in the world, transforming social layers of this country on a scale never before dreamed of. So fast has this industrial revolution been developing that 60 percent of the jobs held by the working population today did not even exist during the First World War, while 70 percent of the jobs that existed in this country in 1900 don't exist today. Not only have work classifications been fundamentally altered, but the work force has multiplied from 20 million in 1900 to 40 million in 1944 to 68 million today. The change is not only in numbers. Over 20 million of those working today are women, and by 1970 it is expected that women workers will have increased to 30,000,000—a work force of women which will be one-and-a-half times the entire work force of 1900.

The United States has transformed itself so rapidly from an agricultural country to an industrial country, and as an industrial country has undergone such rapid industrial revolutions that the question of who is in what class becomes an ever-wider and more complicated question. Today's member of the middle class is the son or daughter of yesterday's worker.

When I was a child, my mother's chief ambition was to learn how to read and write, because if she had been able to read and write she could have become a first-class cook for some rich white people. That, for her, would have been success and the realization of what was, for her and in her day, a high ambition. Her ambition for me was that I should obtain an education so that I would not have to do the things she had to do. In America, more than in any other country, the revolutions

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in the mode of production have been accompanied by changes in the composition and status of classes. Today most workers in the plant have been to high school and quite a few have even been to college. All either plan or wish to send their sons and daughters to college—their sons so they won't have to work in the factory on what they call a dull and automated job; their daughters (get this!) so that they won't have to marry some bum but can make their own living and be free to decide whether they want to marry or not marry, unhampered as they have been in years gone by, when the big aim was to raise a girl so that she'd be able to meet and marry a good hard-working man who would provide for her and the children.

America is therefore at the stage where no class is a homogeneous segregated bloc as in the early days in Europe when, fresh out of feudalism, everything was controlled by a few large owners of estates and factories, while the rest of the population were the direct servants of the ruling class, whatever the form in which they worked for it. Nor is it like the United States in the period before the Civil War when, in the South, you had the big landowners with millions of slaves watched over by a few straw bosses, while in the North you had craftsmen in small shops, farmers, and textile millworkers. Nor is it like the 1920's when the farms were being mechanized and the rural population was pouring into the big cities to man the machines and the assembly lines of the mass production industries that had grown up since the First World War.

In the 1930's, with the country in a deep economic crisis, the old craft unions went into a state of decline, and people in panic and disillusionment began to create new forms of organization. They were spurred on by an administration which called itself the New Deal and which, in order to save the country from total collapse, initiated certain reforms, thereby creating an arena in which the people could act. This led to a wave of further social reforms and the birth of the CIO which at that point was the biggest social reform movement that had ever taken place in America. Radical groupings for the first time had a mass force in action within which they could propagate and agitate for their theories and ideas, ideas which

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were predominantly based on European concepts of organization, and on Marx's, Lenin's, and Trotsky's theory of the class struggle. Thousands of young intellectuals, most of them the sons and daughters of European immigrants, began to take part in and become part of the labor movement. At that time the validity of their approach was strengthened by the fact that the bulk of the American workers were still "raw workers" and not at all articulate—sharecroppers, auto workers, textile workers, rubber workers.

What has transpired since then? The sons of the factory workers and coal miners have become teachers, engineers, draftsmen, scientists, social workers. In fact today, even the radicals no longer think of their children replacing them on the assembly line, or with the pick and shovel in the coal mine, or behind the tractor. Today the largest bulk of organized workers in this country is made up of truckers, dispatchers, etc., in the transport industries. The other large bulk, mainly unorganized, is composed of teachers. There is a growing army of technicians and engineers who today have the same status in industry as did the plumbers, carpenters, and skilled workers in yesterday's industries. That is all they are, nothing more, nothing less.

Even in the South this transformation is taking place and not only among whites but among Negroes. There are many tens of thousands of Negro youths in the colleges today, and they are the ones leading the freedom struggles in the South. They are the sons of ex-GIs, men who have worked in the steel mills, on railroads, in factories, in the mines, but are determined that their children shall not follow in their footsteps.

Today the working class is so dispersed and transformed by the very nature of the changes in production that it is almost impossible to select out any single bloc of workers as working class in the old sense. Today something like 15 percent of industrial employment is in war industry—in the production of missiles, tanks, guns, rockets—and the men and women in these industries hold all kinds of positions. Some of these positions in years gone by would have classified them as middle class; some make salaries that exceed those of the executives of some corporations. The sons and daughters of

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yesterday's ditch-diggers are today's engineers, scientists, toolmakers, electronic specialists, nuclear physicists, school teachers, social workers, time-study men, cost-analysis experts, laboratory technicians, hospital nurses, secretaries to big executives, as well as typists, file clerks, dictaphone operators. Only the mothers and fathers are still left in those jobs which were once considered the testing ground of the pure working class. And each year these pure working-class jobs become fewer and fewer as automation moves in and takes over.

However, it is not only diversification of work that has changed the working class. The working class is growing, as Marx predicted, but it is not the old working class which the radicals persist in believing will create the revolution and establish control over production. That old working class is the vanishing herd. There are only 12 million of these production workers left in American industry, out of a total work force of 68 million. Moreover, since the Negroes were the last hired into these bottom jobs, over 30 percent of these 12 million production workers (or about 4 million) are Negroes. So the Negroes, whom the radicals do not ordinarily think of as workers, form a large proportion of this working-class force which is usually considered as the revolutionary force, while the native-born whites who have been able to move up with every change in production are less and less inside the working-class force.

By examining the history of the CIO, the industrial revolution, and unemployment, we can get some idea of the revolutionary changes that have so rapidly developed in America, directly leading to changes in the nature of work, the social composition of various strata of the population, the classes within it, and the culture of the population.

The CIO came in the 1930's. It came when the United States, which had fought in the war of 1917 and built up large-scale industry out of the technological advances of that war, was in a state of economic collapse, with over 12 million unemployed. The workers in the plant began to organize in the underground fashion which such a movement always takes before a great social reform—in the cellars, the bars, the garages; in the same way that the Abolitionists had to organize—a

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minority against the sentiments of the community. Involved in getting the movement under way were Communists, Socialists, wobblies, radicals of every type, along with preachers and a new layer of militant workers. Sitdown strikes erupted all over the country. All auto workers, except those of Ford, were involved, and the movement spread to allied industries.

To grasp the social significance of the CIO it must be clearly understood that the workers in taking hold in the plants did not take power. They only took hold of the plants. They did not take over the state government, or the national government, or the city police, or the National Guard, or the army. But in their struggles with the police and often with state troopers, they mobilized that section of the population which was not directly involved but which felt it also had a stake in the struggle. People from all strata of the population began to support these struggles centering around the workers and often to participate in them, both physically and financially.

It should also be clearly understood that all the workers did not act as one, nor did they all sit down as one, nor did they all join the movement as one. When the sitdown movement began in the shops, some workers stayed in while others went home and waited to see how it would all come out. The great Ford plant at River Rouge, where more workers were concentrated than in any other plant in the country, did not erupt at all. It was only four years later, in 1941, that the Ford Motor Company was brought into the union. It is necessary to realize that more workers were organized *into* the union than themselves spontaneously organized the union. The struggle for the union was also the battle against the scabs. There were workers who had to be forced to join by those who had seen and felt the benefits of this great social organization.

From 1935 to the entry of the United States into the war in 1941, we saw in this country the greatest period of industrial strife and workers' struggle for control of production that the United States has ever known. We saw more people than ever before become involved and interested in the labor movement as a social movement. Those who worked in the plants under a new Magna Carta of labor, the great Wagner Act, not only had a new outlook where their own lives were concerned. They

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also had the power to intimidate management, from the foremen up to the top echelons, forcing them to yield to workers' demands whenever production standards were in dispute. When management did not yield, the workers pulled the switches and shut down production until it did yield. So extensive was their control of production that they forced management to hire thousands and thousands of workers who would not otherwise have been hired. Yet it should be remembered that even at this point, at the height of its greatest power at the point of production, the CIO never solved the question of unemployment. It took the Second World War to put back to work the millions who had been unemployed throughout the 1930's. At the height of CIO power, we had more unemployed than we do now, both absolutely and proportionately.

The first serious contest of the CIO came in 1938 and it expressed itself in contractual language in 1939. That was when the union agreed with management to outlaw sitdowns inside the plants.* The workers, not to be outdone by the union contract, quickly devised a new way which would later prove to be the path of opposition to both union and management. They began to walk out *without union authorization.* In 1939 and 1940, with the shadows of war hovering over Europe, the contract stated that the union would not cause or instigate sitdowns or walkouts in the plants. The NLRB was set up in Washington and then, following Pearl Harbor, the War Labor Board. The union leaders gave the government the no-strike pledge, and there followed one of the biggest debates that has ever taken place in the union over the question of whether or not the unions should abide by this pledge. Although thousands and thousands of militant workers, realizing that their newly won freedoms were being curbed, put up a protest, the CIO and all the other unions except the miners' succumbed. But throughout the war, the workers continued to wildcat over production, even though many had sons in the armed forces. It

* When I speak of "the union" without further qualification, I mean, unless the context indicates otherwise, the United Automobile Workers (UAW). This union displays in clearest form the main trends and developments in the CIO as a whole, and in addition it is the union I know best from long personal experience.

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was here also that the union leaders began to use other forces from outside the unions, including members of the War Labor Board, to persuade workers to return to work for the sake of the war effort.

However, in the flux of the Second World War, the workers created inside the plants a life and a form of sociability higher than has ever been achieved by man in industrial society. For one thing, the war meant the entry into the plants of women workers, Negro workers, Southern workers, and people from all strata, including professors, artists, and radicals who would never have entered the plant before, either because of their race, sex, social status, or radical background. With the war going on, you had a social melting pot in the plant, a sharing of different social, political, cultural, and regional experiences and backgrounds.

Side by side with what was taking place in the shop there was also growing up the union organization and what is today the union bureaucracy. With only one problem at hand—to keep the workers at work—the labor leaders began to sense their power. Yesterday workers at the bench, they now sat at the table with management and with representatives from Washington. If in Washington, on the top level, Roosevelt was clearing things with Sidney* and vice versa, on the local level labor leaders with thousands of workers under their control were also feeling their oats. These labor leaders often used the radical intellectuals as advisers in strategy and tactics. They found these radicals useful in presenting a militant face to the workers. On the eve of the war, the union bureaucracy received the union shop contract which required every worker in the plant to become a member of the union. For the first time the political machine of a plant was organized by the union itself, and the company set up private rooms in the plant for union officials.

Throughout the war period the workers continued to defy the union on its no-strike pledge to the government. Thousands upon thousands of unauthorized strikes took place. (In 1943

* The phrase "Clear it with Sidney" originated at the Democratic Convention in 1944 when Roosevelt said labor leader Sidney Hillman should be consulted on the choice of a vice-presidential candidate.

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and 1944 alone, there were 8,708 strikes involving 4 million workers.) These strikes took place over such issues as the right to smoke a cigarette (the companies for the first time were forced to allow workers in the big plants to smoke so that tobacco chewing was no longer necessary); the right of management to fire guys who were accused of sleeping on the job, or who laid off too much, or who didn't keep up with production; the right to eat on the job, read on the job, and even to cook on the job. Although workers officially had no right to strike, they achieved by these unauthorized strikes such human rights in the shop as to give them the ability to utilize their talents as never before and the opportunity to develop such an understanding of production as no group of workers in history has ever had the leisure to acquire. With the War Labor Board settling the matter of wages, the union leadership spent most of its time at the bargaining table trying to finagle job classifications which would bring a few cents more, hoping thereby to prove to the workers that they were doing something. It was only the miners' union under John L. Lewis which officially took any position with regard to workers' rights during the war. It did this by calling the only strike of national significance, the strike which brought into the labor movement the "No Contract, No Work" slogan.

It made little difference to management, which was making record profits through the government's cost-plus contracts, how many hours workers worked or even how many workers were on the payroll. So corrupt were both union and management that a government study at Packard Motor Company revealed hundreds of workers sitting around and gambling while others worked. The workers were frozen on the job and had no way to leave unless they could harass management into firing them. So some of the more ingenious workers carried on individual wildcats, refusing to work in order to be fired, whereupon they would go to another plant for a few cents more. In this way many workers moved from job to job and saw the inside workings of many plants.

Then as suddenly as had come the war, came V-J Day. An era had ended and a new era inside the union movement began. The control of production and the human relations in-

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side the plant which the workers had achieved were now shunted aside by the union. The struggle was shifted from the plane of relations on the job to the economic plane, where it had never been up to then. For although the coming of the CIO had meant wage increases for most workers, these increases had not been big. The average wage in the plants throughout the war was $1.00-$1.25 an hour. It was the long hours of work which made the paychecks big enough to meet the black market prices and the rising cost of living.

The great General Motors strike of 1945-1946 was the opening gun in the new vicious circle in which wage increases and fringe benefits would be won by the union and hailed as great social progress, only to be followed by concession of some part of the control over production which the workers had won. But flushed with the freedom they had gained inside the shop during the war, the workers almost unanimously supported the early postwar strikes for economic benefits. It was not until 1948 when the union gave management the "security clause," handing over the right to run production as it saw fit, that dissension began to spread.

Reuther had come to power in 1947 and with him a new kind of labor statesmanship which was to set a pattern for the whole CIO. Riding the crest of popularity of his "Open the Books" slogan (which he had raised as director of the 1945-1946 GM strike), Reuther pushed aside all the militants and radicals who in the sitdowns and during the war had built the UAW up into a model for the CIO. The historic escalator clause which the Trotskyites had projected and GM had rejected in 1946 was now accepted by GM. A new pattern of a sliding scale of wages was adopted which became the foundation of the union's "Sliding Scale of Socialism" strategy. The year 1948 also saw the further development of the union's Political Action Committee, whereby the schemers of the Reuther bureaucracy and the CIO leadership in general hoped to take the militancy away from the shop and focus it on the halls of Congress—to do through legislation what the workers had not done through the sitdowns, exercise political power.

In 1950 the UAW launched its historic pension scheme, and the 117-day Chrysler strike took place. In the contract

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which emerged from this strike, Reuther (to use one of his favorite phrases) "nailed down" a scheme for the workers to get pensions and holiday pay. It was with this contract that the workers began to realize how nailed down they really were to the company and how they were being made into a part of it. The contract evoked from the workers, particularly the younger ones who were unable to see any benefits for themselves in the pension schemes, the first serious opposition from the ranks. The pension pattern quickly spread to other unions. Again the UAW had established itself as the model for the labor movement.

But 1950 also brought something else—the 5-year contract. GM hailed it as a guarantee of five years of industrial peace. From the workers' standpoint it was the beginning of the stalemate, and a rash of wildcats began which were to continue until the expiration of this contract and even up to the expiration of the next contract, in 1958. During these eight years, from 1950 to 1958, the workers used the wildcat as a defensive weapon to fight off encroachment on their control at the point of production, while the companies gradually wore them down with the help of the union.

During this period, management's strength began to assert itself in conjunction with the Republican administration in Washington. The economic pace of the country was beginning to slow down as Truman's "police action" in Korea was being brought to an end. But the United States was still moving from a welfare state to a warfare state: the Cold War was on, the McCarthy era was here, and the radicals and militants were on the run, pushed out by Reuther's insistence that all opponents were "parlor pinks." The Taft-Hartley Act, enacted under Truman, the friend of labor, was now being enforced by Eisenhower. Merger of the AFL-CIO to centralize labor's strength was being talked about everywhere. No one said that the CIO, which represented the most radical point yet reached by labor in the United States, was now going back to join those whose only contribution to the labor movement had been the conservatism of business unionism. All that mattered now was a bigger organization. Strength was measured by size.

The wildcat movement reached its peak in 1955. In that

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year the Ford and GM workers, who up to that time had more or less supported the Reuther machine, believing that thereby they were supporting unionism, erupted in nation-wide wildcats while Reuther was still celebrating the "Guaranteed Annual Wage" contract (which was to turn out to be only a supplementary unemployment benefit). The wildcatters all over the country raised the slogan of "Specific Local Grievances" and forced the union to give them the right to local strikes over these grievances. For the first time Reuther and his associates were really scared. They had been warned by the workers that control of the machine was one thing and control over the workers quite another, that a contract between the union and the company is not necessarily a contract between the workers and the company.

However, a new force had now entered the picture, a force which the union had given up its claim to control when in 1948 it yielded to management the sole right to run production as it saw fit. With the decline again of auto production after the Korean War, and with the signing of the 1955 contract, management began introducing automation at a rapid rate.

Automation is a change in the mode of production which is more radical than any since the introduction of the assembly line. But unlike the assembly line, which was to increase the manufacturing work force over what it had been, automation is an advanced form of technology which replaces individual human controls with electronic controls. What had already happened to the coal miners with the mechanization of the mines was now catching up with the CIO in chemicals, rubber, steel, glass, autos, machinery, etc.

As the companies began to step up their pressure for higher job standards from the workers, the union itself began to try to persuade the workers that automation would provide more jobs for them. Caught squarely between the union contract and the company, the workers continued to wildcat against every attempt to reduce the work force, but each time they were forced to return by the union officials. New plants with new automated machinery began to spring up all over the country. The work force in the old plants was broken up,

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scattered to the new plants. Thus the machine shop work which had been done by 1,800 at the old Chrysler-Jefferson plant was now being done by 596 in the new Trenton, Michigan, plant which supplies not only the old plant with machined parts but all the other plants of the corporation. Layoffs followed by the hundreds as more was being produced not only by the new automated machinery but by forcing workers to tend more of the old machines—man-o-mation. With the building into the automated machines of more controls, thus reducing or eliminating breakdowns, even skilled workers were no longer needed for repair work.

The workers wildcatted, held meetings of their locals, voted not to work overtime, all in an attempt to stem the tide. But the union continued to send them back, and so the layoffs continued, reaching into every section of the plant, and including office workers, time-keepers, and paymasters. As the office workers found their places taken by IBM machines and computers, high-heeled and silk-frocked women began to join the production workers on the picket line.

Finally, after 137 wildcats at U.S. Rubber in one year and 700 wildcats in the Chrysler plants in three years, the union agreed with the company that any worker who wildcats should be first warned and then summarily dismissed. That put an end to wildcatting. Then came what was for all practical purposes the end of the union when, in 1958, under the pressure of the company and for a period of four months, the union insisted that the workers continue on the job without a contract. Meanwhile, the company introduced new work standards when and how it pleased, daring the union to strike. When the 1958 contract was finally signed, there were few workers in the plant who did not realize they had returned to fully company-controlled plants. Time-study men and work layout specialists roamed the plants like sniffing bloodhounds, spying, taking pictures, watching over the workers' shoulders, while the shamed union representatives hid behind pillars or in the toilets.

The cooling-off period which the union had devised in the 1955 strike over local grievances was now in full contract effect. After a certain number of workers' grievances had been

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accumulated, a strike vote could be taken. Then a 60-day wait was in order. Then, if the International Board considered the grievances worth a strike, a strike might be held, etc., etc. Meanwhile, the company was free to keep the work standard in effect and get out all its production.

So ridiculous has the union become as a workers' organization that in 1958 when the contract with Chrysler was being ratified on a Sunday, the union authorized the workers to take a strike vote on the next day.

Once again the workers devised a method to hit back, but this time not against the company. In December, 1958, the unemployed began to picket both the plant and the union against overtime. When this happened, the union, in cooperation with the company and the courts, saw to it that a ruling was handed down that any picketing by the unemployed of a plant is in violation of the contract. Not satisfied with this outlawing of actions by its unemployed members, the union at its next convention decided that unemployed workers could only retain their membership and the right to vote if they reported to the local union during the last ten days of each month. Thus the union has itself drawn the line between the employed and the unemployed. Today unemployed workers march around the Chrysler plants protesting overtime, but the union does not allow them to do so during hours when the workers are actually going into the plant. They may only march when the workers are already inside working.

All that is now left to the workers is the picketing of the union itself.

From 1955 until today the workers have made it absolutely clear that man does not live by bread alone. They have insisted that the question of wage raises or money benefits in any form is not what concerns them but rather the conditions of work in the shop. In 1961 the union bureaucracy negotiated new contracts with the "Big Three" and American Motors. If you take the word of the workers themselves, you will see that not one of the issues that they consider the major ones was settled by the new contracts. The overtime which they insisted must go and the shorter work week they wanted have been tossed out the window. In fact, before the ink was dry on the

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new contracts and before the workers had even ratified them, the plants were scheduling six days a week, ten hours a day. Not only was nothing done to improve working conditions. Management now had another three-year contract under which it can legally pursue the merciless speed-up and intimidation which have been developing since 1955. Even the small representation of stewards and committeemen which workers retained at Chrysler has been reduced. At American Motors wash-up time has been cut out. Faced with the question of unemployment and accepting it as permanent, the union has now embarked on an all-out program to ease as many workers out of the plant as possible, through severance pay, pensions, increased unemployment benefits. At the same time, it is pushing a profit-sharing plan to incorporate those still left in the plant into management itself. When American Motors workers made it clear that they didn't want the profit-sharing plan, the union manufactured a new definition of democracy: the holding of one election after another until the workers vote the way the union wants them to vote. Joining hand in hand with management, it conducted an intensive educational program to brainwash the workers into line. At General Motors, where local union after local union, with the Pittsburgh local in the lead, refused to go back to work until their local grievances had been settled, the International simply brought all dissident local officers to Detroit where, together with management, it whipped them into line. In the Chrysler set-up, where the Twinsburg, Ohio, stamping plant is the key to continued production, the International came to a settlement with the company over the *unanimous* opposition of the entire local bargaining committee.

The UAW is just one union among the major CIO unions. But it has been considered the most advanced, the most progressive, the model of the labor movement that arose in the 1930's. If this is what the UAW has done, it is not difficult to imagine the state of the other CIO unions which failed to reach the heights of militancy and social advancement of the UAW.

Thus, after 25 years, the UAW has given back to management every right over production won in the movement of

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the 1930's and the war years. Today the workers are doing in eight hours the actual physical work they used to do in twelve. At 6:30, a half hour before the day shift begins, you can see workers setting up their operations so that they will not fall behind during the hours for which they are paid. They are afraid to go to the toilet, to get a drink of water, to take time off to go to the funeral of a relative. If they refuse to work overtime, they are written up and sent home on a regular working day. They are afraid to walk around with a newspaper in their pockets for fear that they will be accused of reading on the job. Whenever the company wishes to work the men more than 40 hours a week, all it has to do is "schedule" overtime. Here is an example of how "scheduling" works: Recently a worker at one of the Chrysler plants refused to work through lunch when asked to do so by the foreman. The foreman took him to Labor Relations. The Labor Relations man asked the foreman, "Did you tell him the work was scheduled or did you just ask him to work?" The foreman replied that he had only asked the worker to work. Whereupon the Labor Relations man said, "Next time tell him the work is scheduled, and then if he refuses you can fire him because we have the sole right to schedule production as we see fit."

Anyone listening and talking to workers in the auto plants today can tell that the workers are through with the union. In the early days of the union, the most common expression in the shop was, "Now that we have a union we don't have to take a lot of the stuff that we used to take." Now the expression is, "When we had a union we didn't have to take this stuff." For over four years now it has been obvious that the workers themselves have drawn the curtain on the era of the union.

When the situation has reached such a stage, all questions of what the union should have done or could have done, or what some other leaders might have done or should have done, or what might have been achieved if some other policy had been followed—all these questions become completely irrelevant and abstract. To continue to think in such terms is to repeat the mistake that the Trotskyites made for thirty years as they tried to formulate an alternative policy and leadership for

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Stalin, while Stalin himself was going ahead and building not only the Russian bureaucracy but a Russia which no longer bears any resemblance to the Russia of 1917.

The end of the CIO is not necessarily due to the advent of automation, although it is automation which has made clear its helplessness. It is due to the fact that all organizations that spring up in a capitalist society and do not take absolute power, but rather fight only on one tangential or essential aspect of that society are eventually incorporated into capitalist society. *The fact, the key to the present situation, is that from the beginning the union did not take absolute control away from the capitalists.* There was no revolution, no destruction of the state power. The union itself has therefore become incorporated into all the contradictions of the capitalist system and is today fulfilling the same functions for the American state as the Russian trade unions do for the Russian state.

But what about the experiences that the organized workers have had in the last 25 years and what is going to happen to the workers who were organized into the CIO, now that automation has arrived and the assembly-line system and mass production by mass production workers are coming to an end as the typical mode of production?

First of all, these workers have undoubtedly made certain very substantial gains not only for themselves but for society, as all workers have who have carried on the class struggle.

The CIO movement gave the American public its first real taste of class consciousness and social thinking, establishing in the American mind for the first time the idea of democracy on the job, in the factories, the offices, and every place where people work. The whole idea of human relations at work, which has since become the subject of innumerable studies by industrial relations experts, is the product of this movement. The CIO, in conjunction with the war and the activities of the Negroes themselves, established a framework within which Negroes could fight for equality inside the plant. It has done the same for women workers. Over the years it has provided a focal point for the energies of tens of thousands of idealistically minded young people who found in the labor movement a cause that they could serve. The theory that America has a

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class structure, so long disputed, was finally recognized after the CIO was organized. It was the CIO movement, and following it the Second World War, which established the production worker as a citizen of American society rather than just a beast of burden.

But the question is: What is going to happen to the workers who established these values now that automation is cutting so sharply into their ranks? What is going to happen to the steel, auto, rubber, aircraft, coal workers, who are today the vanishing herd? This is a burning question, not only to these workers themselves but to all who for so long have looked to these workers to save American society as a whole.

These workers will not just fade away, although their numbers will be constantly diminishing both relatively to the rest of the working population and absolutely as older workers die or are pensioned off and no replacements are hired. Those who remain have undergone a very rich economic experience. They are not only educated in the meaning and nature of modern production, but through this they have acquired a certain wit which they will use to evolve tactics of self-defense, prolonging their tenure as long as possible. They have also had a very rich political experience—with the union, with management, and with the government—from which they can draw as they join other strata of the workers in the struggles which will inevitably develop as the pressure is transferred to these new workers. But above all, they have learned a great lesson for all future workers: the lesson that those in whom they put their trust to serve them have wound up as their masters. From now on these workers are going to fight these new masters every step of the way, sometimes advancing, sometimes retreating, but always antagonistic. Their fights will clarify for the new revolutionary forces what a struggle entails.

But what about all the unemployed? What will society do about them? This would be one question if we were talking about a socialist society. It is another question when we are talking about a capitalist society, which is what the United States is today. The capitalists will take care of them. The capitalists, you say? Aren't they the most inhuman people on

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earth? Aren't they the ones whom these workers have been fighting tooth and nail all the time?

Here is one of the greatest contradictions of capitalism itself. Today the capitalists have to feed these untouchables instead of being fed by them. Faced with an economic crisis or industrial change, as after a war or when a new mode of production is introduced or when the market is glutted with goods, the first thing that the capitalists say is, "We have a cushion." What is the cushion? It is the very thing that these capitalists refused to give for so long and which the workers forced them to yield only by long and bitter struggles—social security, pensions, severance pay, unemployment benefits, supplementary unemployment benefits, charity, welfare. But the capitalists are not going to pay for these, you say. You are so right. The workers have paid and are still paying for them.

Today over 100,000 UAW workers are on pension—the product of the new method of silent firing which the companies have devised to get rid of one set of workers without having to hire new ones. Even more coal miners, steel workers, rubber workers, iron ore workers, railway workers, have been eased out in this way. In fact, the railroads have made the process clearest of all. They will hire no new firemen, they say, but those still working can continue to ride like dummies in the cabs until it is time for them to retire. In the auto shops one of the methods of silent firing involves the use of the physical rating code. Workers are required to take a physical examination each year and are coded accordingly. Any worker over 60 who cannot keep up with production is forced to retire on the basis of physical fitness. Those under 60 are laid off, draw unemployment benefits until they are exhausted, and then go on social security disability.

What about those millions of unemployed who have never been called back to work and have exhausted their compensation? Well, the government can periodically extend compensation a few weeks longer whenever it fears these unemployed may be getting desperate, and then finally there is welfare, where the bulk of them wind up. But won't this cost the state, the country, the city, the manufacturers a lot of money to take care of all these people? But the people pay for that also,

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through taxes on those still working. It is among these taxpayers that the tempo of revolt is accelerating.

What about the young people to whom the doors of industry are closed because there are no more semi-skilled jobs and because they have not been trained for the new technical jobs? There is always the mass army, the mass peacetime army which, like automation, we didn't have in the United States in earlier periods. This army, the biggest peacetime army in the world, is the modern equivalent of the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930's. It is the place where a part of the unemployed youth are now regularly dumped and where periodically even some of the employed are transferred in order to make room for others to take their jobs. Only now it is not civilian, it conserves nothing, and it is paid for out of the taxes of those still working and excludes the most handicapped and underprivileged—the illiterate and the physically unfit.

It is clear that this growing army of the permanently unemployed is the ultimate crisis of the American bourgeoisie. But the American bourgeoisie is a powerful bourgeoisie, and it will take every step in its power to moderate, cajole, temper the revolution which this condition will undoubtedly provoke. It is also clear that the most organized workers in this country, the members of the old unionized strata, the vanishing herd of production workers, have learned that in the actions they will take or may take from now on, they will have to be joined by other forces. Today, the problem of control over production and the solution of their specific local grievances will have to be dealt with by larger sections of the population. These are now, more than ever before, questions which require the taking on of the union, the city government, the state government, and the national government. That these workers can or may revolt is not the question. Even one worker can revolt. But workers are not fools. They want to win sometimes too, and this is true of American workers more than of any other workers in the world. When they struggle, they like to know that they can achieve some immediate success. And understanding the structure of society as they do, they know they are going to have to join with others in order to win. They will have to move on a scale of revolt powerful enough to smash the union, the com-

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pany, and the state which, under the guise of national security and national defense, denounces every move they make on their own behalf as irresponsible and irreconcilable with the system itself.

Why don't they take over their own organization, their union? Looking backwards, one will find that side by side with the fight to control production, has gone the struggle to control the union, and that the decline has taken place simultaneously on both fronts. As the company regained control of production through bargaining with the union and through automation, the workers have been losing control of the union. So that just as the workers today know that they have to challenge more than the plant management for control over production, so they know that merely taking over the union today would gain them very little. Historically, workers move ahead by the new. *That is, they bypass existing organizations and form new ones uncorrupted by past habits and customs.* In the 1930's the workers did not take over the AFL. They formed the CIO, a new organization, adapted to the new forms of industrial struggle. It is also significant that when the AFL and the CIO finally joined together in 1955 with the aim of strengthening the American labor movement, they did not become stronger but rather declined in numerical membership and influence. Millions of workers in the South have never been organized by the unions and never will be because the unions no longer have the social power to overcome the resistance of the Southern industrialists who control the local sheriffs, judges, police, politicians, and agents of the federal government. Millions of unemployed have been run out of the unions because they are afraid that these unemployed may explode in some action that would disrupt the cooperation between union and management. Thus with every day more people who can be classified as workers are outside the labor organizations than inside them.

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CHAPTER 2

The Challenge of Automation

Since 1955 and the advent of automation, overtime has been detrimental to the workers. Again and again workers have been faced with the decision to work overtime or not to work overtime, and the decision has usually been: "To hell with those out of work. Let's get the dollar while the dollar is gettable." The amazing thing is that this has nothing to do with the backwardness of these workers. Not only can they run production and think for themselves, but they sense and feel the changes in conditions way in advance of those who are supposed to be responsible for their welfare. But with all these abilities there is one big organic weakness. Over and over again workers in various shops and industries, faced with a critical issue, only divide and become disunited, even though they are well aware that they are being unprincipled and weakening their own cause as workers. Since the advent of automation there has not been any serious sentiment for striking, particularly if the strike was going to come at the expense of material things that the workers already had in their possession, like cars, refrigerators, TV sets, etc. They were not ready to make any serious sacrifices of these; they would rather sacrifice the issue. Between the personal things and the issue, they have chosen the personal. Most American workers have geared themselves to a standard of living that is based on a five-day week *plus*—either in the form of overtime or another job, part or full time. And any time this standard of living is threatened, it is a personal crisis, which means that more and more decisions are being personalized and individualized rather than collectivized and socialized.

What then happens to the class struggle? At this point the class consciousness of the workers tends to shift from what has traditionally been considered its main quality, hostility to

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the class enemy outside, and to focus on antagonisms, struggles, conflicts among the workers themselves. Fights among the workers begin to sharpen, although they no longer take the form they did in the 30's when the workers were divided by race and nationality prejudices ("Dagoes," "Wops," "Polacks," "Niggers," "Buffaloes," etc.). The division is now between two groupings. On one side are the brown-noses, stooges, and workers who are only looking out for themselves, those who are complacent because of the fringe benefits they assume they have won through the union, particularly those near to retirement, and those who would revolt but are afraid of the union bureaucracy or of being fired and then forgotten or branded as "nuisances" and "troublemakers." On the other side are those who emphasize issues, who raise a cry about rights, who call upon workers to make decisions on principles and issues. Among the latter are the unemployed who picketed the union for agreeing to overtime work and who continue to picket the plants against overtime even at the risk of being considered nuisances and troublemakers by those inside the shop, showing that the only ones who are seriously concerned about unemployment today are the unemployed themselves.

Yet these same workers who call the principled ones "nuisances" know exactly what their own chances are. In the average auto plant today, for example, ex-foremen make up nearly one third of the work force. Although these ex-foremen know they'll never get back on supervision, they still keep hoping and trying to make an impression on the bosses by their work. The same thing is true of a lot of other workers. They know that the speed-up is going to get worse and worse, but they continue to keep up with it rather than sacrifice a few days' pay to show the company how much they resent it. Instead they take the easy way out and blame it on the union. It is true that contract-wise the union has made all this possible. But at a certain point the union simply becomes an excuse, a pretext for not taking a stand on issues. The sell-out that has taken place in the contract between the union and the company does not change the fact of the corruption that has taken place in the workers.

These struggles among the old workers, which are creating

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such antagonisms among them, are really only delaying tactics on the part of the old herd. They do not touch the real question. It is automation which is the reality facing them and everybody in American society today. America today is headed towards an automated society, and it cannot be stopped by featherbedding, by refusal to work overtime, by sabotage, or by shortening the work week by a few hours. America today is rapidly reaching the point where, in order to defend the warfare state and the capitalist system, there will be automation on top of automation. The dilemma before the workers and the American people is: *How can we have automation and still earn our livings?* It is not simply a question of retraining or changing from one form of work to another. For automation definitely eliminates the need for a vast number of workers, including skilled, semi-skilled, unskilled, and middle-class clerical workers.

It is quite obvious that the attitudes and relations to their work of the new strata of workers who are already deeply involved in automation, are different from those of the old workers. It is these new relations to their work which have already made it impossible for the union to organize these new workers or for the old herd of workers to establish any relation to the new workers. The old workers regard the new ones as close to management and as part and parcel of the process which is eliminating them. The union can only approach these new workers in terms of economic demands or job classifications. But their salaries are high enough so that they are not concerned about a few cents more an hour. They start at salaries much higher than the old skilled workers ever dreamed of attaining. But they do not think like the old skilled workers in terms of job classifications. Not at all. Rather they welcome constant changes in production as a challenge to their ability, knowledge, and ingenuity. Automation to them is as fascinating as going to school and tackling new problems every day. This interest in their work also makes them quite unconscious of the effect that their work is having on the old workers. But there is more than that. These new workers are not like the old inventor-geniuses who were hired by the company only so that their brains could be picked (e.g. as Henry Ford hired George

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Washington Carver at the peak of his abilities). These new workers are part and parcel of the new *process* of production, and at the same time their ideas are so crucial to the direction of the work that they are inseparable from management and the organization of the work. In their attitude to work and in the process of their work they have invaded management to the point of actually controlling the flow of production itself. But at the same time, in much the same way as the semi-skilled workers of the CIO era failed to seize political control, these new workers are leaving the political direction of their work, the purposes for which it is intended, to the old management. And because they lack any experience of struggle, even in getting their jobs, it is unlikely that any initiative for political struggle will come from them. Yet they are the new work force coming into a position of strategic power in production at a time when all the social problems of American society are being posed.

Automation replaces men. This of course is nothing new. What *is* new is that now, unlike most earlier periods, the displaced men have nowhere to go. The farmers displaced by mechanization of the farms in the 20's could go to the cities and man the assembly lines. As for the work animals like the mule, they could just stop growing them. But automation displaces people, and you don't just stop growing people even when they have been made expendable by the system. Under Stalin the kulaks and all those who didn't go along with the collectivization of agriculture were just killed off. Even then, if they had been ready to go along, Stalin could have used them. But in the United States, with automation coming in when industry has already reached the point that it can supply consumer demand, the question of what to do with the surplus people who are the expendables of automation becomes more and more critical every day.

Many liberals and Marxists say that they should be used to build schools and hospitals and be sent to foreign countries to aid in their development. But such a proposal has as its premise that this is a socialist society when it is in fact a capitalist society, and what motivates a capitalist society primarily is the return on its investment.

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There is only a limited number of these old workers whom capitalism can continue to employ in production at a pace killing enough to be profitable. The rest are like the refugees or displaced persons so familiar in recent world history. There is no way for capitalism to employ them profitably, yet it can't just kill them off. It must feed them rather than be fed by them. Growing in numbers all the time, these displaced persons have to be maintained, becoming a tremendous drain on the whole working population, and creating a growing antagonism between those who have jobs and those who do not. This antagonism in the population between those who have to be supported and those who have to support them is one of the inevitable antagonisms of capitalism. And it is this antagonism, brought to a climax by automation, which will create one of the deepest crises for capitalism in our age. In this crisis one section of the population will be pitted against another, not only the employed against the unemployed but those who propose that the unemployed be allowed to starve to death rather than continue as such a drain on the public against those who cannot stand by and see society degenerate into such barbarism. On both sides there will be members of all strata of the population.

Thus automation not only poses the questions of poverty and employment and related economic questions. It brings into sharp focus that element which the Negroes always bring with them when they struggle for their rights. It makes the question social because it poses the relations of man to man.

As automation spreads, it will intensify the crises of capitalism and sharpen the conflicts among the various sections of the population, particularly between those working and those not working, those paying taxes and those not paying taxes. Out of this conflict will grow a counter-revolutionary movement made up of those from all social layers who resent the continued cost to them of maintaining these expendables but who are determined to maintain the system that creates and multiplies the number of expendables. This in turn will mobilize those who begin by recognizing the right of these displaced persons to live, and from there are forced to struggle for a society in which there are no displaced persons.

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Thus automation is that stage of production which carries the contradictions of capitalism to their furthest extreme, creating and sharpening inside capitalist society the conflicts, antagonisms, clashes between people that make for social progress and the inevitable struggle that goes with it.

The fact has to be faced. Automation is the greatest revolution that has taken place in human society since men stopped hunting and fishing and started to grow their own food. It is capable of displacing as many productive workers from the work force as have been brought into the work force since the invention of the automobile at the beginning of this century. (Today an estimated one out of every six American workers depends, directly or indirectly, on the auto industry for employment.) In fact, so devastating would be the immediate effects if automation were introduced at one fell swoop that those who would appear to benefit most from it (the capitalists) are as afraid of its introduction as the workers threatened with displacement.

Up to now the Marxists have more or less gone along with the old herd of semi-skilled and skilled workers who have resisted automation, at the same time reassuring themselves that private capitalists themselves would not have sufficient capital to go all out for automation. What they have failed to recognize is that it is not private capital as such which is introducing automation. The great bulk of the capital invested in automation today comes from the government and is paid for by every member of the American population, whether he is a worker, a member of the middle class, or rich. This is all done in the name of research and defense, but, whatever it is called, the benefits are as great to the capitalists as if they had put out the capital themselves. Thus the capitalists have found a way to get around the high cost of automation as well as the high cost of scrapping still productive machinery.

One of the major aims of the Kennedy administration is to encourage automation, by granting subsidies to companies who go full-speed ahead on it, both directly and in the form of tax write-offs. Therefore, when workers fight the introduction of automation, they are not only taking on private capitalism but the federal government itself. Yet so great is the con-

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tradiction generated by automation that the government, while giving it such encouragement, must at the very same time set up a new committee to study what is going to happen to the millions of displaced workers.

There is continual talk of new training programs. Yet those making these suggestions know that training is not the answer. In the very period when individuals are being trained, new machinery is being introduced which eliminates the need for such training. Take, for example, the draftsman. With the old methods the engineer used to present his ideas to a draftsman who would make a rough sketch of these ideas which would then be given to another draftsman to refine. A third draftsman then drew the final blueprint, incorporating in it the exact size, the appearance, and the correct fittings to the millionth of an inch. Today all that this same engineer has to do is talk his ideas into a tape recorder which plays into a computer and the ideas are transformed into a design; the design in turn is fed into a developer and, once developed, can be handed over to the work foreman for building. The three draftsmen have been eliminated from the work process, and only the engineer and the toolmaker remain, each having to know more than before about the other's job.

Marxists have continued to think of a mass of workers always remaining as the base of an industrialized society. They have never once faced the fact that capitalist society could develop to the point of not needing a mass of workers. But this is the dilemma of our time in the United States, and as of now only for the United States. The question before Americans is whether to be for the technological revolutions of automation despite all the people who will be displaced, or to be opposed to this advance, sticking with the old workers who are resisting the new machinery, as workers have done traditionally since the invention of the spinning jenny.

When Marx was writing in the middle of the 19th century, he was dealing with the most advanced countries of his day. But even these countries were underdeveloped in the sense that the great bulk of the people were still engaged in farm work. A large part of the labor force was still needed to produce the

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foodstuffs for people to eat and the raw materials (e.g. cotton) for industry.

Today if you told the average worker in a big American city that he ought to go back to the farm, he would give you all kinds of arguments. The only reason why he might go back is to get away from the Bomb. He wouldn't think of going back in order to make a contribution to society in the way of production. He knows enough about the food that is rotting in the warehouses and the taxes he has to pay to store it. He knows enough about the great change that has taken place in the technology of farm production so that farm work is no longer socially necessary for the great majority of people.

But as yet few people have been ready to face the fact that, with automation and cybernation, we are reaching the stage where work in the factory is also no longer going to be socially necessary for the great majority. It is easy to accept that a man should move from one form of labor to another form, but it is hard to accept that there will no longer be a mass demand for *any* labor. It is so taken for granted that the production of goods is man's fundamental role in society that, even when technology is making this unnecessary, most people from the politicians and economists down to the man in the street still try to dream up schemes that will require a lot of people to play a material productive role.

Yet, unless the Bomb falls and throws what is left of mankind back to the stage of hunting and fishing, society can't go backward technologically. Once man has gone on from the stage of hunting and fishing to that of agriculture, it makes no sense for him to go back to hunting and fishing as a means of making his livelihood. If man no longer needs to drive a mule in order to live, you just can't make him drive a mule. Why then should people keep looking for work in order to justify their right to live if there is no longer a social and economic need for them to work?

Marx envisaged a long period of industrialization during which the number of workers would be constantly growing. He believed that in the course of the conflict between labor and capital in the productive process, a new force would be created with human values of organization, cooperation, and

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discipline, in sharp contrast with the individualism, competition, and greed of the capitalists. This new force he called "socialized labor" and he said that it was the new society growing up within the old.

In this country during the 30's Marx's perspectives were realized to an astonishing degree in the organization of the CIO. The work force had grown in numbers to meet the needs of the mass industrial production, and now came its co-operation, organization, discipline, and revolt. True, this work force did not actually take over power from the capitalists, but in the crisis of the Depression the pressures it exerted compelled the capitalists to establish the Welfare State with many of the social benefits that Marx had advocated.

That was a generation ago. Today when automation and cybernation are shrinking rather than expanding the work force, many people still think in the same terms. They still assume that the majority of the population will be needed to produce material goods and that the production of such goods will still remain the heart of society. They have not been able to face the fact that even if the workers took over the plants they would also be faced with the problem of what to do with themselves now that work is becoming socially unnecessary. They have not been able to face this fact because they have no clear idea of what people would do with themselves, what would be their human role, or how society would be organized when work is no longer at the heart of society.

I don't think Marx would have had any difficulty in facing this fact if he were living today. Marx saw more clearly than anybody that men's ideas are determined by the stage of production. However, Marx is dead and one cannot continue to quote him as an all-time solution for social problems brought on by the development of production. A new theory must be evolved and it is likely to meet as much opposition as Marx's has met.

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CHAPTER 3

The Classless Society

The United States is a Warfare State.

The United States is an inseparable part of Western Civilization.

The United States is the citadel of world capitalism today.

The basic philosophy with which all radicals have approached the analysis of the United States has been centered around what the workers would do, ought to do, would have to do, etc., usually ignoring the power of the state and the bureaucracy which are today such an essential part of American capitalism; ignoring the fact that when Marx wrote 100 years ago, and even up to 30 years ago, there was no mass standing army, navy, and air force, and no universal draft in this country; and sometimes realizing but more often forgetting that their own ideas are shaped by no less a fact than that they themselves are by-products of Western Civilization.

Today this philosophy is at the crossroads. The emerging nations of Asia and Africa, which have all these years been dominated by a little corner of the globe known as Western Civilization, are clashing head-on with that civilization. The Marxists themselves, who have done very little since the time of Marx to understand the rest of the globe, merely pigeonholing it in their minds as colonial and semi-colonial, must now do some serious re-evaluating.

American Marxists, like Marxists all over the world, believe in Karl Marx's ideology. They believe, first, that capitalist production and capitalist society are organized for the benefit of the capitalists and against the masses; and second, that at a certain stage in the development of capitalism, the people living under it will be forced to revolt against it because their conditions will become intolerable and because there will grow up inside this society the embryo of a socialist society, united,

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disciplined, and organized by capitalist production itself.

In America, the Marxists have found their role more challenging than in any other place on the globe. For inside this country are all the necessary material ingredients which could make socialism possible, and yet it all seems so remote.

It is not a question of whether socialism can or cannot be imported. It is only the specific conditions of a country at a particular time that make people struggle. The fundamental point is that it is impossible for an American Marxist movement to build itself on the ideas of mass poverty and the abolition of private property which have played such an important role in the development of the European Marxist movements. This alone makes the challenge to American Marxist groups more severe than in any other country. For although the poverty-caused misery of the American masses has by no means been eliminated, it is so dispersed and scattered among various segments of the population that it does not constitute a fundamental and unifying issue to mobilize the masses of the people in struggle.

Thus the question, "What is socialism?" finds the American Marxists constantly seeking a new formula to fit in with the ever-changing conditions of the country. So that today when one asks an American Marxist point-blank, "What is socialism and why should the people struggle for it?" he is baffled and has to fumble around for an answer.

Marx in the 19th century said that there would have to be a transitional society between the class society of *capitalism* and the classless society of *communism*. This transitional society, which he called *socialism*, would still be a class society but instead of the capitalists being the ruling class, the workers would rule. It was this rule by the workers which, for Marx, would make the society socialist. As the ruling class, the workers would then develop the productive forces to the stage where there could be all-around development of each individual and the principle of "from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs" could be realized. At this point there could be the classless society or communism.

In the United States the forces of production have already been developed to the point where there could be the

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classless society which Marx said could come only under communism. Yet ever since the Russian Revolution, all kinds of socialists have differentiated themselves from the Communists in terms of political policy and political organization but have never tackled this question of Marxist theory that socialism is just a transitional society on the way to communism and that only under communism can there be a classless society.

How have the revolutionary socialists arrived at just being for socialism while still claiming to be Marxists? The turning point was the Russian Revolution. If the Russians had never won the revolution, socialism and communism, with communism as the ultimate goal, would have remained a part of Marxist ideology, and Marxist organizations all over the world could have kept on struggling against capitalism without having to clarify what they were struggling for.

It was after the Russian Revolution and on the basis of examining what emerged from it that American Marxists began to split and decline. They were always splitting over the question of the correct policy for the socialist, i.e. the workers', state in Russia—instead of advancing their theory to keep step with the advances of capitalism which, in the United States in particular, were creating the productive forces to make possible a struggle far beyond what was possible in Russia. They tried to make the Russian blueprint fit the United States when the United States was developing productivity to the point where the workers, through economic, political, and social pressure but without political power, were deriving from capitalism the economic benefits which elsewhere the workers would have had to take political power in order to achieve.

What then is still lacking in the United States where capitalism has achieved its highest form? What is it that the American people want, which they find lacking in capitalism, and which will mobilize them to fight against capitalism and for another society, call it what you will?

A social revolution in the United States has to mean control of production by the producers. A social revolution in the United States has to mean production for the use of those who need it. But beyond these goals the social revolution in the United States has to mean the classless society—a so-

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ciety in which the antagonisms and divisions between classes, races, and people of different national backgrounds are eliminated and people can develop among themselves civilized and cooperative relations, relations which are possible today as never before because there need no longer be any problem of scarcity of material goods and services. All the problems of scarcity which up to now have required the exploitation of various races and immigrant groupings have now been outmoded by the technological advances of production.

The horizons which the social revolution in America open up are more tremendous than anywhere else in the world. But the path which the revolution will have to take in this country is also more difficult and vicious than anywhere else in the world. First of all, it is the Warfare State with its huge forces which has to be challenged. And second, inside each American, from top to bottom, in various degrees, has been accumulated all the corruption of a class society which has achieved its magnificent technological progress first and always by exploiting the Negro race, and then by exploiting the immigrants of all races. At the same time the class society has constantly encouraged the exploited to attempt to rise out of their class and themselves become exploiters of other groupings and finally of their own people. The struggle to rid themselves and each other of this accumulated corruption is going to be more painful and violent than any struggles over purely economic grievances have been or are likely to be.

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CHAPTER 4

The Outsiders

Many people in the United States are aware that, with automation, enough could be easily produced in this country so that there would be no need for the majority of Americans to work. But the right to live has always been so tied up with the necessity to produce that it is hard for the average person to visualize a workless society. The result is that when people face the perspective of their jobs being eliminated by automation, all they can think of is learning a new trade or a new profession, hoping that in this way they can maintain their right to live.

As long as this country was in the situation that most underdeveloped countries are in today, it was natural to tie together the right to live with the ability to produce. But when a country reaches the stage that this country has now reached, productivity can no longer be the measure of an individual's right to life. When you travel around this country and see new automated plants springing up in one area after another, it becomes apparent that the era when man had to earn his right to live through work is rapidly drawing to a close. Within a few years, man as a productive force will be as obsolete as the mule.

It is in this serious light that we have to look at the question of the growing army of unemployed. We have to stop looking for solutions in pump-priming, featherbedding, public works, war contracts, and all the other gimmicks that are always being proposed by labor leaders and well-meaning liberals. Nor is there any solution through production to aid the underdeveloped countries. Perhaps this would be a possibility if we lived in a world society where the whole world was working in a unified way to advance the welfare of all. But the fact is that we are living in a nation-state society in which millions of

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dollars worth of goods rot away unless they can be used abroad to further the foreign policy of this particular nation-state.

So there is no way to avoid facing the fundamental problems. What we need today is a new Declaration of Human Rights to fit the new Age of Abundance.

This nation cannot long endure short on rights and long on goods. We must accept the plain fact that we are moving towards an automated society and act on the basis of this fact.

The first principle that has to be established is that everyone has a right to a full life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, whether he is working or not. The question of the right to a full life has to be divorced completely from the question of work.

Society must recognize that the magnificent productive tools of our day are the result of the accumulated labors of all of us and not the exclusive property of any group or class. Now that our productive machinery has been developed to the point that it can do the tasks which have heretofore been done by men, everyone, regardless of class, regardless of background, is entitled to the enjoyment of the fruits of that development, just as all men are entitled to warm themselves in the heat of the sun.

Once it is recognized that all men have the right to a full life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, whether they are working or not working, have worked or have not worked, it will be necessary for society to create a completely new set of values. Up to now, because productivity has been low, a man's value has been determined by his labor from day to day, by how much he could produce both to sustain himself and to permit investment in new machinery. Now that man is being eliminated from the productive process, a new standard of value must be found. This can only be man's value as a human being.

Up to now it has always been possible if not always easy to cast aside the productive forces that have become obsolete. Work animals were put to pasture; tools, machinery, factories, and even whole industries have been simply scrapped or put to the torch. It has been said that capitalism wages wars so that it can get rid of surplus manpower that has become ob-

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solete. Whether or not this has been true in the past, no capitalist in these days of nuclear warfare would be foolish enough to take this way out. The key question therefore is what should be done with man who is being made obsolete by the new stage of production. Obviously no ordinary solution is possible. This is the social dilemma of our time.

No one understands better than a worker the humiliation and sense of personal degradation that is involved when some big shot is coming through the shop and the superintendent tells him to "look busy" in order to prove that there is useful work going on. That is what our whole society is like today. By all kinds of gimmicks—including war work, which may end up by killing off those for whom jobs are being created, and a host of government agencies set up to study the problems of "full employment"—the American government is now trying to make work when we are already on the threshold of a workless society.

In the fall of 1961 as Chrysler workers were streaming out of the plant, they were telling one another: "This could be a long strike because the company don't need us at all. They got plenty of cars in storage." That these workers practically to a man felt this way is a sign of the work situation in the United States, not only in the auto plants but in the TV plants, appliance plants, the furniture industry, the clothing industry, and in every domestic industry. It is a known fact that one single auto company like GM or Ford, or a single refrigerator company like General Electric or Westinghouse, or any major steel firm like U. S. Steel or Bethlehem, could produce enough so that all their competitors could close down. All they would have to do is bring in a little more automation and cybernation (automation plus computers). What they are doing today is "competing" with one another and splitting up the profit. Only in war work, and particularly in missiles, can workers feel sure that if they go on strike they will be missed. *This* is the dilemma of the United States: What is to be done with the men and women who are being made obsolete by the new stage of production?

The American economy is kept going today by the pump-priming of war contracts. This kind of work produces no goods

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that will reach the consumer market, because what is produced is blown up or stored—some of it at the bottom of the sea. However, by this means money is put into the hands of the large corporations to pay out to their employees, who in turn buy consumer goods.

It is when you begin to think of a peacetime economy that everybody, from the average worker to the labor leader, from the government official to the big capitalist begins to have nightmares. Each may have a different view of what should happen to the unemployed, but they all have one thing in common: they believe that man must work.

The average worker believes this because that is the only way he or she has been able to live. The labor leaders believe it because if workers didn't have to work, labor leaders wouldn't have anyone to lead. The government official believes it because the role of the government has become that of regulating relations between management and labor, both of whom must exist in order for government to play its part. Thus, as Kennedy's speech to the UAW convention and his overtures to industry show so clearly, government alternately appeases and rebukes both wage-earners and capitalists. Finally, the big capitalists can only see themselves growing richer and more powerful if they are in control of the destinies of the workers and the means whereby they must earn a living.

None of these people, and this includes the liberal economists who propose public works and foreign aid as a substitute for war contracts, has left behind the 18th-century philosophy that man must earn his living by the sweat of his brow, and that anyone who can't or doesn't work (unless he happens to own property), is a misfit, an outcast, and a renegade from society.

None of these people is ready to admit that with automation and cybernation we have to have a much bolder and more radical approach to society. The change which we are facing is more radical than the change which 5,000 years ago transformed men from roving bands of tribesmen and hunters into forced laborers on the irrigation projects of the early states.

Today the creative work of production is being done by the research engineers, the program planners, the scientists, the

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electronic experts. Already there are over 850,000 scientists in industry, without counting all those outside of industry who are working toward much the same goals. What they are creating is a mode of production which, as long as the present system continues, excludes more and more people from playing any productive role in society. This means that our society, as we have known it, is just as finished as feudal society was finished by the time capitalism arrived on the scene. It means not only that hundreds of thousands are yearly being displaced from production, but also that millions are outsiders to begin with. These millions have never been and never can be absorbed into this society at all. They can only be absorbed into a totally new type of society whose first principle will have to be that man is the master and not the servant of things.

Today in the United States there is no doubt that those at the bottom are growing in numbers much faster than the system will ever be able to absorb. This reflects the population explosion which is taking place right here inside the United States. Already there are millions of young men and women who have never held any jobs at all and who live from hand to mouth, either by charity or by petty crime: in other words at the expense of those who are working. They cannot be integrated into society unless they work, and there is no prospect of any work for them. What is more, the social measures which made work for such people in the days of the New Deal are completely silly in an age when you can dig ditches, lay bridges, and build buildings merely by pushing a few buttons.

All this means that there can be no smug plan for reforming this system. Because when you add to those who are daily being displaced from the plant the millions who have never even had a chance to work inside a plant, what you have is no longer just the unemployed and the castaways, but a revolutionary force or army of outsiders and rejects who are totally alienated from this society.

We must have no illusions that there will be any easy unity between these outsiders and those who are inside the system because they are still working. Already, as we have noted above, the labor organizations themselves are separating off the employed from the unemployed for whom they can do

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nothing. The present work force is itself a product of the old society and struggling to survive within it. This means that we must look to the outsiders for the most radical, that is the deepest, thinking as to the changes that are needed. What ideas will they have? They have not yet expressed them clearly, but their target is very clear. It is not any particular company or any particular persons but the government itself. Just how they will approach or penetrate this target I do not know nor do I know what will happen when they have done what they must do. But I know that the army of outsiders which is growing by leaps and bounds in this country is more of a threat to the present "American way of life" than any foreign power.

Ask the average American what is the biggest threat to our way of life and the chances are that he will blurt out "Communism." He sees the threat as coming from a foreign power. Yet the fact that, after all these years of capitalism, he is so afraid of another system means that capitalism has definitely not proved itself to be the system which man must have to live his life as a full and equal human being.

If you can once get the average American to stop blaming everything on the Communists (or the Negroes, or the Jews, or the Italians) and finally face up to the fact that there is a crisis in his own country, and then ask him what the real crisis is, the chances are good that he will say "Automation." But when he says this, he still has a distant look in his eyes as if automation, too, is something that will pass without creating or demanding too great a change in the present system of having to work for a living.

But for the outsiders who have never been and can never be involved in this system, regardless of how much free enterprise or initiative they show, automation means something much deeper. It means that they have to find a new concept of how to live and let live among human beings. A new generation of these "workless people" is rapidly growing up in this country. For them, the simple formula of "more schools and more education and more training" is already outmoded. We already have with us a generation of youth who have completed high school and had some kind of training and yet have found no mode of production into which they can fit. Because as fast

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as they are trained for a higher technical stage of production, just as fast does a new technical revolution take place. Whereas the old workers used to hope that they could pit their bodies against iron and outlast the iron, this new generation of workless people knows that even their brains are being outwitted by the iron brains of automation and cybernation. To tell these people that they must work to earn their living is like telling a man in the big city that he should hunt big game for the meat on his table.

This means that the new generation, the outsiders, the workless people, now have to turn their thoughts away from trying to outwit the machines and instead toward the organization and reorganization of society and of human relations inside society. The revolution which is within these people will have to be a revolution of their minds and hearts, directed not toward increasing production but toward the management and distribution of things and toward the control of relations among people, tasks which up to now have been left to chance or in the hands of an elite.

There are some people among the older generation who recognize that this is the threat or promise contained in automation and cybernation, but most of them are afraid to face the reality and continue to hope that the old house can still be patched up. The outsiders, in contrast, owe no allegiance to any system but only to themselves. Being workless, they are also stateless. They have grown up like a colonial people who no longer feel any allegiance to the old imperial power and are each day searching for new means to overthrow it.

I am not saying that this new generation of outsiders is as of now an organized force. It is not as simple as that. In fact, no existing organization would even think of organizing them, which means that they will have to organize themselves and that the need to organize themselves will soon be forced upon them as they grow in numbers like the beggars on the streets of India. The big difference between them and Indian beggars is that in India the means to live without having to work are not available, while in the United States these means are all around them, before their very eyes. The only question, the trick, is how to take them.

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The forces of a cold war are thus taking shape inside the United States: the war between those who are setting up all kinds of social agencies, training bureaus, and the like to head off the stateless and workless people, and those who are learning every day that these stop-gaps offer no solution to their problems. Just as the natural wealth and technical advances of this country have meant that a lot more people here can share in the material things of life than anywhere else, so the eruption of this new group will pose radical concepts beyond the imagination of us all, but certainly founded on the principle that people should be able to enjoy everything in life and from life, without being fettered or limited by any system.

These radical concepts cannot come from organized labor. In the 30's the class struggle of the American workers, united, organized, and disciplined by the process of production, reached its greatest height in the organization of the CIO. Today in the 60's the American labor movement has reached the end of the road. In the face of the social and ideological adjustments that are necessary to meet the revolutionary changes that have taken place in technology, organized labor is as reactionary today as organized capital was thirty years ago. The fundamental reason for this is that organized labor continues to cherish the idea that man must work in order to live, in an age when it is technologically possible for men simply to walk out on the streets and get their milk and honey. To talk about full employment and getting the unemployed back to work at this point when we are on the threshold of the workless society, is as reactionary as it was for the "rugged individualists" to say in the 30's that the only reason why a man wasn't working was that he didn't have the initiative to go out and get himself a job.

Even in their best days, it should be remembered, the CIO and AFL were not able to do much about unemployment. In 1939 when the Second World War began, there were still more than 9 million unemployed, well over twice today's official figure. With the war, millions of old and new workers went into the plants and the last layer of the population, which had up to then been completely outside of industry—the Negroes—was finally brought in. Following the war the pent-up purchasing power of the population kept employment high for several

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years. But after the Korean War management started a two-pronged attack, automating the plants and tightening up on work rules. At about the same time, unemployment began creeping up again.

Organized labor, instead of facing the challenge inherent in automation and the potentiality of material abundance, responded by continuing to seek ways and means to achieve full employment—ranging all the way from demands for a shorter work week and retraining programs to appeals for bigger tax cuts and fatter war contracts.

Why is organized labor unable to face the issues posed by the 60's? To answer this question we have to look at the changes that have taken place in this country, industrially and socially, over the last quarter century.

As long as the vast majority of a population has not begun to acquire the consumption goods that are possible under conditions of modern technology, the employers are producing not only for profit but also for social use. The people actually need the goods that are being produced, the refrigerators, the cars, the radios, the TVs. These goods provide the material base so that the people can live like human beings. But once the point is reached where the vast majority have acquired these goods, then the manufacturers are no longer producing for social use. Apart from a reduced need for service and replacement, they are producing for a market which has been created not by the needs of the people but by the needs of the manufacturers. They continue producing so that they can continue to make profits and to stimulate the necessary demand, they produce shoddy goods, plan obsolescence, and above all "sell" the population, stimulating its appetite for more and more useless commodities, propagandizing and corrupting it.

Organized labor shares the concern of the employers to keep production going. Its motive is different but the aim is the same. The manufacturers want to maintain production for the sake of profits; the unions want to maintain it to keep up their memberships. Thus the labor organizations have in effect become partners with management in a system of corrupting the population. Each needs the other because each is faced with the same insoluble predicament of capitalism today—that

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through the use of machines enough can now be produced for everybody without any need either for millions of dollars in profits or millions of people at work.

In order to continue with its philosophy of full employment, organized labor has become part and parcel of the "American way of life." It has become partners with the military in establishing and maintaining a war machine the only purpose of which is to threaten the destruction of all humanity.

The philosophy of "Solidarity Forever" on which the labor movement was built is today in rags and tatters. There is a never-ending dog-eat-dog fight going on between international unions over the available work—who is going to build a new factory, who has jurisdiction in a new construction project, who is going to do the electrical work or transport the equipment. There is a never-ending dog-eat-dog fight going on between locals of the same union over which plant is actually going to get a particular operation or which local will have jurisdiction in a new construction project, who is going to do the electrical work or transport the equipment. There is a never-ending dog-eat-dog fight going on between those workers who want to work only 40 hours a week and the money-hungry ones who spend all their time catering to the boss and stool-pigeoning on their fellow-workers in order to get the fat $150-$200-a-week checks that come from working 50, 60, and 70 hours. Meanwhile those inside the plant become ever more removed from those outside.

The philosophy of "Workers of the World Unite" is also in rags and tatters. The AFL-CIO has official connections with organized labor in other countries and periodically sends a token sum to support a strike. But American organized labor's attitude to the workers of the world is essentially the same as its attitude to the outsiders at home. They should be thrown a bone now and then, but if they were to make any real progress it would be a threat to the insiders. Thus, organized labor is as opposed to imports from foreign countries and as anxious about America's future in relation to the European Common Market as the most reactionary employer. It is as opposed as the American government to the independent development of

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the economy of the underdeveloped countries and as ready to act as a counter-revolutionary force against all revolutions in the underdeveloped countries.

What about the union militants? Every few months around any auto shop, groups of workers are getting together to discuss how to "bring the union back to the shop." The union is already there, officially. It is recognized by the company; a contract exists between the company and the international governing that particular plant. Yet these workers are constantly getting together with the expressed purpose of "bringing the union back." For them "bringing the union back" means bringing back the atmosphere that existed in the late 30's and the early 40's—when they would shut down the plant over a production dispute and settle the issue then and there; when they could talk back to the supervisor without being penalized; when they could go to the toilet whenever they needed to; when they could get a day off to attend someone's funeral without begging the foreman, as they have to do nowadays.

These are very natural and human rights, rights which the workers themselves know they have lost. Yet these groups attract very little support. In fact, the more militant they are the less support they get. Instead, the groups who more or less follow the union machine usually win majority support, easily coming out on top in union elections without even making any promises to the workers except to support the policies of the international.

The militants who are always meeting and discussing and devising ways and means of "bringing back the union" are generally the most advanced workers in the sense that they are ready to struggle for better working conditions. Yet when you tell these militants that they are never going to bring the union back to where it was, because the union that they are thinking about and hoping for has already outlived its usefulness, and that the workers are never again going to struggle for and through this kind of organization, they can't understand why. They have become so accustomed to what used to happen in the early days of the union, when large numbers of workers were very militant, that they still believe that there are plenty of militant workers left in the shop and that all they have to do

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is to get together and organize them. They cannot face the changes that have taken place in production since the 30's. They cannot get it into their heads that these old workers who used to be so militant are now a vanishing herd who know that they are a vanishing herd, who know that, because of automation, the days of workers like themselves in manufacturing are numbered, and who have therefore decided that all they can do now is fight to protect their pensions and seniority and hope that the company will need them to work until they are old enough to retire or die, whichever comes first.

You would think that in this restless group of militants who have fought so hard for progress, there would be some who could see the handwriting on the wall and realize that work as they have known it, and the mobilization of people in struggle over working conditions, have become obsolete. But it is in this group of militants that you find the greatest reluctance to accept the inevitability of the workless society. In this refusal to face reality, these militants who are so advanced are really behind the average worker who has reconciled himself to eventual oblivion. Why?

It is precisely because these workers are more advanced, in the sense of wanting to struggle for progress, that they cling to the idea of organizing the struggle through work. The fact is that it is through the struggle over work that social reforms have been won over the last 100 years, and especially in this country from the middle 30's to the middle 40's. The struggle around working conditions has been the most progressive factor in American society, educating and organizing people to fight for human rights as nothing else in this society has been able to do. These militants know this because they have lived through it. Most of them, without ever having read a word of Marx, have experienced in life what Marx analyzed in theory. They cannot give up an idea or a method on which they have depended for progress until they can see another one, and they have not yet seen or figured out another way to fight for human needs and human rights.

There are a lot of people outside the shop, not only radicals but liberals also, who have much the same idea as these union militants. Only it is not as obvious in their case

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because they are not in the shop and therefore do not have the opportunity to organize themselves into little groups so easily. But these liberals and radicals are also hoping and waiting on the workers to struggle. Even those who attack Marx most viciously still think like Marx, because what Marx thought was so true until only a few short years ago when the new age of nuclear energy, automation, and cybernation began.

Actually these union militants will go down fighting for things like a shorter work week (30-for-40), or two months paid vacation, or six months paid furlough, or the four-hour day—all of which demands are within the framework of keeping the work force intact. Even when there is no longer any reason, because of the development of automation and cybernation, to keep the work force intact, they will still fight to keep it intact. Therefore it is hopeless to look to them as the ones to lead the fight for a workless society. The workless society is something that can only be brought about by actions and forces outside the work process.

Government officials, labor officials, and the university professors whom they both hire to help them beat their brains are working overtime, trying to find some scheme to create full employment. But whatever schemes they come up with, whether the 35-hour week, new training programs, bigger and badder war contracts, or bigger and better public works projects, they are playing a losing game. America is headed toward full unemployment, not full employment.

In 1962 I visited the West Coast where a large percentage of the country's war work is concentrated and the newspapers rejoice every time a new war contract is awarded to the area. Yet, talking to guys who work in the plant like myself, I found that their main worry is what to do about automation and the people it is throwing out of work. A friend of mine told me about a Mexican-American who works in the plant with him and who describes automation as a beast of the world which is moving in on people and nobody knows what to do about "it." This worker has come to the conclusion that the only sensible solution is for the company to put in new machines as fast as it can, while every guy who is displaced by these new machines continues to receive his weekly paycheck. His idea

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is that the sooner the machines become fully employed and the people become fully unemployed, the better.

My friend has put some thought into how this would work and has decided that if the old philosophy that man has to go to work must be retained, then the displaced workers could continue to go to the plant and just sit around and watch the machines. He was quite sure that if this happened the workers would be continually putting forward new suggestions as to how to redesign the machines to make them more efficient and displace more men, instead of doing what they are now doing, constantly trying to think up new ways to fight the machine so as to keep their jobs. We both agreed that there is nothing more agonizing than holding back the ideas that every worker is constantly getting as to how to increase productivity.

I told him that I could foresee a time when machines would be so perfected that there would be no need for the great majority of people to go into the plant except occasionally, and that I was quite sure that, once released from the necessity to work, men and women would come up with new ideas for increasing productivity that would astonish the world. Fishermen just fishing for fun would come up with new ideas for fishing, guys puttering around their lawns would think up new ways to grow grass, people with nothing to do but sit around and observe would be constantly producing new ideas and bursting to share them with others. It is only the necessity to work, *forced labor,* that has created in man the need to fight new modes of production and to keep new ideas about increasing production to himself.

One immediate step out of the dilemma would be to employ the seniority system in reverse. As new machines are brought in, those who have been working longest, instead of being kept on the job, should be eased out of work. Every company, even if it has to get subsidies from the government to do so, should put in the most modern equipment available, and as this is done those workers with the highest seniority should be laid off with continued full pay equal to that of those still working.

This would be very far from being a solution, however,

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since it does not take into consideration the million and a half young people who are entering the adult world every year plus the millions like them who, being unemployed, have no claim on any company. It is in connection with this group of outsiders that those who hope for full employment are really caught in a dilemma. These millions can never become part of any work force in the sense that we know it. There is no Siberia to which they can be sent, and even if there were they wouldn't go. They have seen too much of what is possible in this society; they also know that there are enough of them around to be a threat. Already the big question in cities like Detroit is whether a way can be found for these outsiders to live before they kill off those of us who are still working. How long can we leave them hanging out in the streets ready to knock the brains out of those still working in order to get a little spending money?

Obviously it would be far better to give these outsiders a weekly check also, rather than leave them with no alternative but to look for guns and knives to use against the insiders. But giving them a check is not enough. There has to be some way in which to develop their creative abilities and sense of responsibility, because without this they can become completely empty creatures. What makes it so easy to propose a weekly pay check for those who have worked all their lives is that they have already acquired some discipline and sense of responsibility from their work. But those who have never worked and will never get a chance to in this society will have to find some other way to develop their creative abilities before these are destroyed by forced idleness.

This is one of the great challenges facing our society today. Another is the question of peace and war to which we now turn.

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CHAPTER 5

Peace and War

When the A-Bomb was exploded by the United States over Hiroshima, the vast majority of Americans rejoiced. To them the Bomb simply meant the end of the war and the return home of brothers, sons, fathers. Few Americans realized the potential threat that the Bomb represented to all mankind. In fact, not until much later was it learned that key scientists who had actually been involved in the creation of the Bomb had argued against its military use, pointing out that it would be only a few years before other countries would have the same weapon. Einstein, without whose theories the A-Bomb could never have been created, said later that if he had known the use to which his ideas would be put, he would have become a plumber.

Outside the United States today what comes to many people's minds when the Bomb is mentioned is the fact that it was first dropped on a nation of colored people and not on the Germans who were also the enemy in World War II. Inside the United States this fact is rarely mentioned.

For four years after the end of the Second World War the A-Bomb was to the United States what the British Navy had been to Western Civilization prior to the First World War. It made the United States "boss," and the Americans didn't let anybody forget it. But it was obvious that the United States could not long retain its monopoly of the Bomb. In fact, in the era of scientific technology symbolized by the Bomb, the United States could only lose the military supremacy which it had previously enjoyed on the basis of mass armaments production. It was difficult therefore for people outside the United States to take seriously the American offer to put the Bomb into mothballs if no other power would try to produce one.

Then in 1949 two things happened which brought about

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a radical change in world politics. First, the largest country in the world, China, was taken over by the Communists. And second, Russia exploded an A-Bomb.

The mere thought that the United States would now have to justify its position as a world power in more or less equal competition with the Russians produced panic in every section of American official society. It was this panic which created the environment in which McCarthy ran wild. In rapid succession a list of subversive organizations was issued by the Attorney General and laws were passed to screen and bar from the United States anyone suspected of radical connections. Noncitizens were denied the formal democratic rights of free speech, free belief, and free association, of arrest only with warrant, and of the right to judicial appeal over administrative decree. Naturalized citizens, some of them residents of this country since infancy, became subject to denaturalization and deportation by administrative action if suspected of radical politics at any time in their lives. The heads of government began accusing their predecessors of treason, like murderers and cutthroats at bay in a basement. New Deal liberals were hunted with the ferocity of a pack of blood-thirsty wolves; scientists, newspapermen, and artists were hounded into becoming informers or else giving up their professions. People hid their books, destroyed records by Paul Robeson, and cancelled their subscriptions to liberal newspapers and magazines, lest by these signs of intellectual activity they invite investigation on suspicion of subversion.

In foreign policy the United States began its brink-to-brink improvisation; the hasty gathering up of allies like Franco and Chiang Kai-shek, completely discredited in their own countries and abroad; the wooing of Tito; the arming of Germany; and finally the reckless development and testing of bigger and better bombs and guided missiles, competing with Russia like two football teams competing for an international championship.

During this time the Marxist organizations in the United States persistently pointed out the horrors of the Bomb, but primarily in the spirit of propaganda, against capitalism and some against Russian Communism, and in general for social-

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ism. Meanwhile they went their merry or unmerry way, as if the Bomb were just another stage in imperialist warfare, saying little about it as long as the workers were quiet about it. With the history of past anti-war groupings in mind, and particularly comparing their own "realism" with the idealism of the pacifists, they were content to rest their hopes on the workers' eventually making a revolution, taking control of society, and putting an end to imperialist war. Actually, what they failed to realize is that just as automation represents a revolution in the process of production, so the A-Bomb, H-Bomb, and intercontinental missiles represent a revolution in the process of warfare. Mankind has now reached the stage of pushbutton war and mass suicide.

Up to now it had been possible to speculate about what attitude the workers or the masses of the population might or ought to adopt toward a war once it had been declared or started, e.g. organize a general strike or rise in protest and bring it to an end. It had been possible to predict that the shattering effects of a prolonged war fought with modern weapons would set the stage for revolutions, after which the workers could begin the herculean task of reconstructing society.

The new reality today, however, is that the Bomb does not recognize any distinctions between race, class, or nation. When it falls, it will fall on everybody, regardless. When it falls, it will leave no class behind to reconstruct society—not even the workers. A nuclear war would leave no time for anyone to debate or argue about policy or organize a general strike. If there is going to be any movement that will stop the Bomb and create the conditions for revolution, it will have to come *before* the Bomb is dropped—not afterwards. If there is going to be a revolution over the question of nuclear war, it will have to be *before* the nuclear war starts—not afterwards.

With the launching of Sputnik and its beep-beep-beep overhead, the world suddenly became aware that an H-Bomb could be launched in the same way. The Atlantic and Pacific Oceans which had made so many generations of Americans feel so secure no longer appeared as a protection. Americans began

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to feel the dread and horror with which Europeans for years had been responding to the brinkmanship of Dulles.

But the years of Cold War had made war a way of life for the government and all its military and paramilitary departments. It had become a way of life for half of America's major industries. It had become a way of life for America's workers. It had become a way of life for the trade unions. It had become a way of life for the professional crusaders against Communism and the elements in the population whom they represent. It had become a way of life even for most of America's churches.

Significantly, the only people who had begun a serious questioning of war as a way of life were those most directly and intimately involved in the revolution which had taken place in modern warfare, the atomic scientists themselves. Even before the explosion of the first Bomb over Japan, a task force of scientists, headed by Dr. James Franck, had set itself up as a "Committee on Social and Political Implications" and submitted a report to the government arguing against the direct military use of the Bomb. In 1945, after the Bomb had been dropped, a group of scientists under the leadership of Eugene Rabinovitch, a Chicago chemist, began publishing the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* as a forum where scientists could point out the perils of nuclear warfare and examine roads to disarmament. So intense have been the debate and discussion among scientists that it is possible to speak of two unofficial "parties" in the American scientific community: the "humanitarian party" which calls in varying degrees for a ban on the Bomb; and the "government" party which supports and lends authority to the government's policy. The humanitarian party, emphasizing the cooperative, non-national, and in fact international character of science, has been responsible for holding international conferences with their colleagues from behind the Iron Curtain. These conferences have become known as the Pugwash Conferences, since the first three of them (1957-1959) were held on the Pugwash, Nova Scotia, estate of American industrialist Cyrus Eaton, after permission to enter the United States was denied by American authorities to Communist scientists.

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However, the humanitarian party among the scientists has remained isolated from the American public. The loudest voice heard in public has been that of Dr. Edward Teller, chiefly responsible for the creation of the H-Bomb and leading exponent of government policy. When Nobel Laureate Linus Pauling was called before a Congressional Committee in 1960 and asked to inform on those who had helped him get up a 1958 ban-the-bomb petition to the UN (this petition had been signed by 11,021 scientists from 49 countries, including 104 from the United States), it caused scarcely a ripple in this country.

In the summer of 1961 this situation began to change. After a three-year moratorium on testing by the two powers, and at the height of the Berlin crisis, the Russians resumed nuclear testing at a rapid rate. By this time the American people could no longer comfort themselves by doubting the technological capacities of the Russians. Gagarin and Titov put an end to that.

In Britain where the country had been caught between East and West and where it was obvious that the whole island could be destroyed by one bomb, the ban-the-bomb movement had been growing for years and reached a peak in 1960-1961. The Africans declared their opposition to any nuclear testing on their soil. But in the United States anti-bomb demonstrations could rarely rally more than a few hundred supporters, mainly long-time pacifists.

Following the Russian tests, however, the movement began to take on mass momentum. November 1, on the initiative of a few women in Washington, D.C., a series of demonstrations took place in 60 cities from coast to coast. In all, about 50,000 women took part. In New York and Los Angeles there were several thousand women in the demonstrations. In the Boston area hundreds of students and university faculty members marched on the Federal Arsenal at Watertown. With the entry onto the scene of the women, the students, and the professors, the ban-the-bomb movement began to take on a broad social character. Since November 1, 1961, Women Strike for Peace committees in various cities have remained more or less intact, in order to organize periodic demonstra-

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tions at the UN, before Federal Buildings, to march on Washington, to send delegations to City Councils and State Legislatures, etc. Across the country over 4,000 professors added their names to an open letter to President Kennedy, protesting the futility of Civil Defense in this age of nuclear war. Students from all over the country organized a March on Washington on February 16, 1962.

It is quite obvious that these demonstrations have begun to take on the character of a social movement, confronting the warfare state and implying a challenge to it despite the announced (and no doubt genuine) intentions of the participants simply to implement the "peace race" proposals of the President. In turn, the growth of the ban-the-bomb movement has given and will give further impetus to the counter-revolutionary super-patriots, led by the Birchites, the militant ex-generals, the Dixiecrats, and the China Lobby, and gain support among the veterans and middle-class layers who live on the past glories of the All-American state. Up to now the organized labor movement has given only token support to the peace movement. Obviously fearful that widespread agitation against the Bomb will upset the warfare economy and increase dissatisfaction among workers already living in dread of unemployment, it has carefully refrained from calling upon workers to participate in the ban-the-bomb movement.

The new peace groupings, and particularly the scientists and women, have already passed one test that other organizations in the United States have failed since the Cold War and McCarthy era began. They have been able to meet and overcome the label of "pro-Communism." This was the great victory won by the Women Strike for Peace at the House Un-American Activities Committee hearings in late 1962. Up to then, every grouping which had been labelled in this way by patriotic organizations or by any of the various governmental committees and agencies had been fatally weakened. But so great is the fear of nuclear annihilation among the scientists and women that it has enabled them to overcome the fear of Communism. Communism at worst could only mean a change in the political system. The Bomb would mean no existence and therefore no system at all. In that sense these peace groupings

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have gone beyond the "Better Red than Dead" smear, and this in itself is a great victory.

But the United States is so full of other social and economic contradictions that even though the new peace movement has been able to surmount the kind of official and unofficial attack which heretofore has crippled other organizations which began to tackle the warfare state, this has not been enough. In October, 1962, the Cuban crisis came along, and although many of the members of the peace movement found themselves in protest picket lines, the heart of the peace movement has practically stopped beating since that time. The fact is that, for the peace movement really to have contested the President's actions in Cuba, it would have had to call upon the missile workers in *this* country not to produce missiles, and for the sailors of *this* country not to man the ships. In other words, it would have had to face the reality that as long as the United States has missiles and rockets, every other country has the right to have missiles and rockets, even one only ninety miles off the shores of the United States, and regardless of whether such missiles are offensive or defensive.

Up to the time of the Cuban crisis the peace movement in this country only had to grapple with the question of bombs and missiles in the hands of the two great powers—the United States and the USSR. But in the Cuban crisis it was confronted with the question of missiles and bombs in the hands of a country which is part of the world revolutionary and anti-colonial struggle. This is the question which the peace movement is going to have to face increasingly as the months and years pass.

In the Cuban crisis the peace movement was confronted with the question of the ex-colonial countries and their rights, just as in the course of its development inside this country, it has already been confronted with the question of its relation to the Negro struggle. The reason is that the question of peace is much greater than the question of simply stopping bomb tests. All the factors which go into deciding whether a nation should have to depend upon the Bomb or not are shaped by the world revolutionary struggle and also by the struggle between the already developed nations and developing nations. Climax-

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ing it all is the question of China and who will be able to talk to the Chinese. What peace group in the United States would even be allowed to send someone to China? How would they even know the road to China, considering the colossal igorance that exists in this country on the question of China? What will they have to offer the Chinese? And why should the Chinese even listen to any of these Americans when the Chinese have already been read out of the human race by Americans, in the same way that Negroes have been read out of the human race by Americans for 300 years? It is quite clear that the Chinese are not caught in the same predicament that the Negroes have been caught in for so long. The Negroes were trapped inside this country, but the Chinese have their own country and they are not asking to be integrated into this country. In fact, they are not even asking to be integrated into the world society. They existed long before other modern societies came on the scene, and they are not begging anyone to recognize their independence. They achieved it themselves through a revolution in 1949.

Will the peace movement fight for the recognition of Red China simply from the standpoint of fear, or is it going to fight for the recognition of Red China from the standpoint of the plain humanity of the Chinese? The peace movement cannot save humanity as long as it refuses to face the inhumanity that exists inside this country toward other racial and national groupings, and that exists in the relations of this country to other races and nations. Nor can it ever get a peacetime economy in this country until it clashes with the war economy and the reasons why such a war economy exists. Because the same people who are for war in this country are those who are for discrimination against races and nations. They are the ones who are for the continuation of American superiority over other nations and other areas of the world. They are the ones who want the workers to continue to work in order to live, even if the work they are doing is nothing but war work in order to kill. And they are the same ones who are for taxing the war workers in order to get the money to keep on making war materials. There will be no peace until there is war against these Americans.

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CHAPTER 6

The Decline of the United States Empire

History has known many empires—the Sumerian Empire, the Assyrian Empire, the Chaldean Empire, the Egyptian Empire, the Roman Empire, the Holy Roman Empire, the British Empire, to name only a few. All these empires came to an end, usually as a result of a combination of military defeat and internal revolt. Now it is the turn of the United States Empire.

For over a century, under the cover of the Monroe Doctrine, the United States has ruled its Latin American domain as Chicago gangsters rule a certain territory, warning all others to keep out.* Long before the word "satellite" was used to describe the relationship of the Eastern European countries to Russia, it was obvious that the economic and political life of Latin America revolved around the Yankee sun. What the Asian and African colonies were to the European powers and what Eastern Europe has been to Russia, the Latin American republics have been to the United States. Although independent in name, their economies have been completely at the mercy of Big Brother to the North, and therefore also their politics. They have been kept in the status of countries with one-crop economies, supplying sugar, bananas, coffee, tin, copper, etc., chiefly to the United States, which could therefore control them by manipulating commodity prices and quotas. At the same time the United States has been the largest supplier of Latin American imports of manufactured goods and of investment capital. In fact, 80 percent of foreign capital invested in Latin America, public and private, comes from the United States. When manipulation and control by economic means have fallen

* I am not implying that Latin America constitutes the entire United States Empire. But together with Canada, Latin America does constitute the heart and core of the Empire, and both its problems and its fate can best be studied there.

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short, the United States has hesitated only a moment before using money and arms directly to prevent and foment, divert and steer revolutions and counter-revolutions, to make and unmake governments. The chief function of the United States government has been to protect the right of firms like United Fruit to exploit the cheap labor and rich resources of Latin America; to maintain in power anti-Communist and pro-United States dictators like Batista in Cuba and Trujillo in the Dominican Republic; and to protect the landowners of gigantic estates from revolt by peasant laborers.

All this time few people in the United States knew anything about this vast continent just below the Gulf of Mexico and the Rio Grande. Those who thought about it at all did so in terms that the movies have made familiar, as the land of bananas and tropical splendor where North Americans can go live it up in the midst of poverty and misery, where Yankee adventurers decide to sell or not to sell guns to rebel generals according to their love or hate for beautiful damsels. Then in 1958 Vice President Nixon was sent on a good-will tour to reassure the South Americans that, despite the billions of dollars of aid sent only to Europe, their Good Neighbor to the North had not forgotten them. When the Vice President was spat on and stoned by mobs in Peru and Venezuela, the government and the people of the United States began to realize how overdue was an agonizing reappraisal of their relations with Latin America. It was clear that the Good Neighbors to the South were getting out of hand, and that the winds of change were blowing in Latin America, stirring up revolutions of the masses which were quite different from those of rival factions which the United States had found so easy to control.

The winds of change became a hurricane in the Cuban Revolution. What started out in Cuba as opposition to Batista inevitably became a head-on conflict with Yankee imperialism. All upheavals which had fallen short of social revolution had fallen back into dependence on Yankee imperialism; Venezuela is a good example. Large-scale private property in Cuba, which was in fact primarily United States private property, had to be confiscated before Cuba could be truly politically independent. Going deeper into social revolution meant deepening

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the conflict with Yankee imperialism and vice versa. This was the path which Castro had to follow whether he wanted to or not.

But Yankee imperialism could not afford to let Cuba set an example in social revolution for the rest of Latin America. Before the Second World War Mexico could get away with the expropriation of foreign oil properties because there was no real danger then that the example would spread. But in 1960, the survival of the Cuban Revolution meant its certain imitation by the rest of Latin America. On the other hand, to have a social revolution in Cuba is practically like trying to have one in one of our 50 states. The Cuban one-crop sugar economy was almost as closely tied to the United States economy as the one-crop auto economy of Detroit is. To reorganize and diversify this one-crop economy required not only confiscation of large-scale United States property. It also required an enormous amount of technical and economic aid. Under the circumstances of United States hostility, this aid could come only from those countries which not only recognized the validity of Cuba's struggles for independence but had reason to welcome them.

In Africa, thousands of miles away from the Cold War powers, it is not too difficult to be neutral. But Cuba, only 90 miles away from Florida, began by being as much an economic, military, and political satellite of the United States as Hungary and the other Eastern European countries are of Russia. Therefore, to break away, it had to have the political and economic aid which Yugoslavia, for example, got from the United States after it broke with Russia in 1948. But Cuba's problem was even more critical. Yugoslavia did not have to confiscate Russian property, and it continued to claim membership in the "socialist camp." Cuba not only had to confiscate United States property. It had to denounce capitalism altogether.

Revolutionaries in the United States hailed the Cuban Revolution as the first socialist revolution in the Americas. The Communist world also hailed it as such. The revolutionaries living under United States capitalism had particular reason to rejoice. United States capitalism, against which they had been fighting all these years and which is the greatest capitalist

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power of this century, had been challenged. But revolutionaries have many different and conflicting ideas as to what does and what does not constitute a socialist revolution. To some it is a matter of material gains; to others it is the nationalization of property; to others it is the political freedom and organization that the masses achieve and/or the arming of the masses; to others it is the formation of workers' councils to control production; to others it is joining the "socialist camp"; and to still others it is remaining entirely neutral of any bloc. The standards and the procedure used in determining the degree of support and rejoicing are much the same as those which the various revolutionary groupings have been employing for over forty years with regard to the Russian Revolution.

What these groupings rarely take into consideration is the fact that the world has moved in these forty years far beyond where it was at the time of the Russian Revolution, and that it is today divided into three blocs: the Western bloc, the Eastern bloc, and the neutralist bloc, with the last bloc lacking economic power but wielding great moral power. But moral power is a long-range thing. When a country within either the Western or the Eastern bloc breaks away from that bloc, it must *immediately* face the question of getting aid from the other bloc in order to survive. This reality has to be faced, not from the point of view of North American revolutionaries and *their* desires, hopes, standards, and morale, but from the standpoint of the country that is making the revolution. In Hungary the revolution was crushed before anyone but the Hungarians had to face the fact that the other Eastern European countries and the Russian people had not come to the support of the Hungarian Revolution, and that therefore the Hungarian Revolution could survive only if it received aid from the Western bloc.

Revolutionaries in the United States are going to be faced with a similar reality time and again in the period ahead as the Latin American revolution spreads. They have no right to use these revolutions to bolster their own morale or to test their own theories about what is socialism. First and foremost, they must take the position that they are *for* these revolutions and that it is the right of all these countries to break away from

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the power that has dominated them for so long and to govern themselves. They must be *for* all the Latin American countries freeing themselves from United States domination. And they must be *for* the people in these countries whenever the latter, feeling that their government is not running the country in the best interests of the people, throw that government out by whatever means they choose to take. The only time when they can legitimately take a position contrary to this is if the revolution takes the form of discrimination against a race or nationality, as for example against the Negroes in the United States or the Jews in Germany. They cannot start with the question, "Where is the revolution going to end?" Any genuine revolution today is going to have to go in a leftward-forward direction because the expectations of the masses everywhere can be satisfied only by permanent revolution in a leftward-forward direction. Except episodically, the direction is not going to be backward because the moment that the revolution goes backward, there is going to be another revolution. Having clarified their minds on this fundamental position, radicals in the United States will no longer have to spend endless hours trying to justify these revolutions as socialist, trying to decide whether they should hold elections or not, whether the people are ready for parliamentary democracy or not.

It is quite obvious that the breakaway of the Latin American satellites will deprive North American capitalists of their main source of super-profit, and there is no reason to doubt that they will try to make their own people pay for these losses. The people of the United States will have to begin facing the fact that their luxurious standard of living has been won, in part, at the expense of the peasants and workers of Latin America. It is unlikely that United States capitalism will be able to arouse the people sufficiently to support an open, large-scale invasion of Cuba for counter-revolutionary purposes. Its strategy is rather to seek to isolate the Cuban Revolution through such measures as the Alliance for Progress. But the Cuban Revolution is not an artificial imported revolution, and the ingredients which set it off exist in all the Latin American countries. This means that, in addition to the Alliance for Progress, which has already become a joke, the United States

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will be carrying out all kinds of maneuvers and gangster tactics —diplomatic, military, and economic—from the use of warships to the blackmail use of economic aid, as it has been doing in the Dominican Republic and at the conferences of the Organization of American States.

It would be unrealistic to expect the people of the United States to come directly to the aid of the Latin American revolutions on any large scale. The grievances and issues which underlie these revolutions and which propel them to success are in Latin America itself. But there are going to be many, many shameful episodes similar to that of the attempted invasion of Cuba in 1961 which will shake up the people of the United States, make them squirm, and force them to question themselves and their government. The spread of the Latin American revolutions means that before the people of the United States there lies a painful period of decline in prestige and in confidence, both in themselves and in their governments, similar to that which the British have been experiencing with the decline of their empire. All this will help to deepen the general revolutionary crisis in this country.

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CHAPTER 7

Rebels with a Cause

When people talk about how many Russians were killed behind the Iron Curtain in the concentration camps, it doesn't move American Negroes at all. The reason is very simple. The same thing happened to them in this country. White American workers didn't have to go through what the Russian workers went through under Stalin because the Negroes went through it for them on the cotton plantations of the South. Every immigrant who walked off the gangplank to make his way in the land of opportunity was climbing onto the Negroes' backs. For the United States is not like any other country which has built itself up on the basis of slavery. This country committed the most unpardonable crime of all. After freeing the slaves, it then segregated them off on the basis of color as inferior to the rest of the population, both in law and in fact. For this crime the United States will occupy a position in the annals of history comparable only to that occupied by Hitler Germany for the crimes it committed against the Jews. But Hitler lasted only twelve years during which he killed 6 million Jews. The crime of the United States has lasted over a century.

To this day, the American nation celebrates the Civil War and records it as a war to free the slaves. But in the eyes of Negroes the Civil War was the war which made it possible for the United States to be industrialized, the war which resulted in the Bargain of 1877 between Northern capital and Southern landed aristocracy, which left the former slaves living and working under a caste system as brutal as that of slavery itself.

Following the Civil War and a brief period of Reconstruction during which Negroes enjoyed their newly won freedoms, the North made its infamous deal with the South. According to this deal, the South could go its way, using the Negroes as sharecroppers on the cotton plantations. In return,

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the North got from King Cotton much of the capital it needed for industrialization, both through export of cotton to England and from its own textile mills. This Bargain of 1877 was never recorded, but it ranks with the other more famous compromises on principle which have distinguished the United States in its relation to slavery.

The Negro question in the United States has therefore never been purely a question of race, nor is it purely a question of race today. Class, race, and nation are all involved. The American nation has become the giant of industry that it is today on the backs of the Negroes. The working class has from the very beginning been divided. The white workers were an aristocracy which benefited first and always from the exploitation of the Negroes, and in between by the exploitation of each new wave of immigrants.

What has made the problem of the socialist revolution in the United States so complicated and difficult for American Marxists is the fact that there has been no mass party of labor in this country as in the industrialized countries of Western Europe. What American Marxists have failed to understand is that in Western Europe the mass parties of labor were formed and were able to endure not only because of the working-class struggle against capital but also because the workers struggled against the landed aristocracy. During this same period no mass party of labor arose here because the workers, as long as they could go their way settling on the free lands of the West and working as free labor in the new industries of the East, were ready to allow the landed aristocracy of the South to exploit the Negroes. Thus the concept of "Black and White, Unite and Fight" has never had any basis in fact in this country: the blacks and whites were never struggling for the same things nor were they united in the same cause even when they were fighting side by side.

When the Civil War ended with the Negroes being returned to serfdom, it was the first major defeat of the class struggle in the United States. From that time on, Americans, including the radicals among them, have regarded the Negro question as a race question. Before the Civil War, Negro struggles were called rebellions and revolts. But after the Civil War

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and the formal emancipation of the Negroes, any violent action by Negroes was just called a "race riot" even when these actions were based on economic grounds, such as jobs, housing, or prices.

So long have the American people lived with this contradiction that it has become a way of life for them. That is why the question of what the Negro struggle really represents, what should be done about it, what is right and what is wrong, is shaking the United States more than any other issue. Why should America fight to free the world when America is itself not free? Why did America fight the last war for democracy when America itself does not have democracy? How can Americans really be for the freedom of Africa when they are not for freedom inside the United States? How can Americans be for freedom and equality the world over when they do not practice freedom and equality at home? How can Americans say they are for parliamentary democracy and free elections abroad when they do not have parliamentary democracy and free elections at home? How can America give advice to countries all over the whole world on how to solve their problems when it cannot solve its own problems? Why does America claim to want to give so much economic progress to everybody else when it finds it so hard to give economic progress to its own colored citizens? How can Americans say they have a free society when the question of where to eat and where not to eat, where to ride and where not to ride on buses, streetcars, and trains, in order to avoid the Negro haunts the average American white before he even leaves his house in the morning?

Thus what began as a class issue and was made into a race issue by the simple act of separating off the Negroes on the basis of color, has now in fact become a national issue, the great, the pervasive, the All-American question that is shaking up every organization, every institution, and every individual inside America and affecting the relationships of all these to the rest of the world: labor, the professions, the church, the courts, the armed forces, industry, employment, transportation, the family, marriage, schools, hospitals, neighborhoods, cities, suburbs, government on all levels, police, firemen, social wel-

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fare, political parties, press, TV, radio, movies, sports. The list is endless.

In the period following the Bargain of 1877, the Negro question remained dormant. Although this period was characterized by most brutal and shameful beatings, lynchings, and rape (worse than before the Civil War because now things were supposed to be different), Americans found it possible to look the other way. All that the Abolitionists had talked about and exposed in the prewar period was drowned out in the thunderous expansion of American industry and the shifting of the class struggle to the railroads and new industries created as a result of the war.

The first serious eruption of violence between whites and Negroes came in the big riot of 1908 in Springfield, Illinois. This in turn led to the birth of the NAACP, an organization formed by Negro intellectuals to defend Negro rights. The First World War and the crisis of American capitalism propelled into the urban centers and the United States Army many Negroes who brought with them all the questions and grievances which up to then had been silenced by the police state in the South. It was at this juncture that Negroes began to discover the many "ifs" and "buts" of American democracy. Up to this point they had been considering "Up North" a haven, revering Abe Lincoln and the Republican Party as their benefactors, putting the Yankee on a pedestal as the fighter for their freedom. Their disillusionment with Northern democracy continues to smoulder in every Negro who has settled up North after knowing life in the South.

The clash between their expectations and the harsh realities of life in the North, plus the blow that they sensed had been dealt to Western Civilization by the First World War and the Russian Revolution, created the mass basis for the Garvey movement, which at its height is estimated to have attracted anywhere from one to six million Negroes, and forced the people of the United States for the first time since the Civil War to face the reality of the Negroes as a force. This reality was never to leave them completely again.

After the First World War the Northern ghettos began to swell as those Negroes in the South who could eke out enough

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money to make the trip continued to migrate to the North. In 1931, simultaneously with the Depression, the Scottsboro Case, involving the legal lynching by the Southern courts of nine young Negro boys, raised the Negro question once again to the status of a major issue not only in the United States but throughout the world. But Negroes were still on the defensive. During the Depression more thousands of Negroes, displaced by the mechanization of the farms, flocked into the cities both North and South. Here they took every advantage of the social reforms of the New Deal.

During the 1930's the CIO erupted, and the pattern which had been created by American capitalism in the Civil War repeated itself. To save the Union, Lincoln had freed the slaves. Now to save the union, Negroes were admitted into it, lest the capitalists use them as strikebreakers and scabs. But this was not too difficult for the unions to do. There were not too many Negroes in industry anyway, except at Ford (which was not unionized until 1941) and in steel where the Negroes did the heaviest and most menial work out of which the immigrants had been upgraded. The bulk of the Negroes were unemployed and on relief.

With the coming of the Second World War, Negroes up North made use of the opportunity created by the weakness of American capitalism to organize the March on Washington movement. Out of this movement came Executive Order 8802, opening up jobs in defense industries to Negroes. Negroes did not give credit for this Order to Roosevelt and the American government. Far from it. Recognizing that America and its allies had their backs to the wall in their struggle with Hitler and Tojo, Negroes said that Hitler and Tojo, by creating the war which made the Americans give them jobs in industry, had done more for them in four years than Uncle Sam had done in 300 years.

Working in industry, fighting inside the armed forces, the Negroes now began to seize upon all the weaknesses of American capitalism. This led to a series of riots in army camps and major cities in the North which reached their peak at the height of the war in the year 1943. Only when the official records of the Armed Services are made public will Americans

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know how many hundreds of revolts took place among the Negro soldiers and sailors during the Second World War.

Inside the plants of the war industries the newly employed Negro workers carried on an offensive battle against both management and the white workers, forcing the white workers to face up to the idiocies of their prejudices and making them admit for the first time that Negroes could perform or learn all the operations of American production which the world had been led to believe could only be done by the superior whites. On the union floor, Negro workers raised problems which the white workers and the union had never before had to face, often causing splits inside the union and among the workers on the issues of human rights and human behavior.

When the war was over, the Negroes did not return to the farms as they had done in large numbers after the First World War. They had established themselves in industry and in Northern communities, and in many plants had built up seniority while white workers were losing it by moving from plant to plant.

In the South the whites started again the old intimidation that had been launched after the First World War. The Klan was reborn and a series of bombings and lynchings erupted from Florida to Mississippi in a campaign to put back in his place this Negro who, having seen another world in the army and in industry, was determined never to be tied down again. In 1948 President Truman, recognizing the growing political strength of the Negroes in the Northern cities, fought and won the election on a program of civil rights, despite the split-away of the Dixiecrats in Mississippi, Louisiana, South Carolina, and Alabama. By now the national government was on the defensive, both in the world and at home. The Cold War was under way and the familiar American pattern was repeating itself. "To save the free world from Communism" the United States was now ready to yield some rights to its Negro citizens.

In 1954 the Supreme Court handed down its famous decision regarding school desegregation, repudiating the old ruling that separate schools could be equal. The Court expected the desegregation to take place only "with all deliberate speed." Instead, Negro parents in the South began to organize and

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mobilize to send their children to formerly all-white schools, even in the face of hostile mobs bent upon upholding the familiar ways of American life and ready to spit and jeer at little children to do so. Then 14-year old Emmett Till from Chicago was brutally lynched in Mississippi and his kidnappers and murderers were let off scot-free in the courts. The flood tide of Negro revolt that had been dammed up for so long began to burst. For the first time Negroes were ready for an offensive against white society. Hitherto their actions had been defensive. Now there would come a series of offensive actions with staggering momentum, one right after the other. Going from the defensive to the offensive, the Negroes now constituted a revolutionary force completely different from that of the immigrant workers, each group of which had been assimilated into the American Way of Life.

In 1955-1956 the Montgomery bus boycott became an international issue as an entire community organized itself to boycott public transportation until the buses were desegregated according to Federal law. In the border states of Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and in Washington, D.C., Negro parents were determined not to be put off by white mobs, and Eisenhower had to send Federal troops to Little Rock to uphold the Supreme Court decision.

Meanwhile, as the sleeping giant of Africa began to waken, the Negro people, who up to that time had been somewhat ashamed of their ancestry, instead began to feel ashamed that, living in the most advanced country in the world, they were so far behind their African brothers in achieving freedom. For the first time the Negroes began to appreciate that although they are a minority in the United States they are a majority in the world, and that what in the United States is portrayed as a race question is on a world scale the question of the rights of the majority of the human race.

In 1960 the Negro offensive took a new step forward. The sit-in movement started, astonishing Negroes who had migrated North in the belief that Southern Negroes would never rise up and fight for their rights. The student sit-in movement aimed at taking and enforcing equal rights in restaurants, stores, libraries, movies, beaches, parks, and all other public

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places in the South. Unlike any previous Negro movement, it aimed at creating the issue, provoking it. The Negro students were not just in the courts arguing the law, as the NAACP had been doing for so many years. They were making and enforcing it themselves, on the spot.

These Negro students were the sons and daughters of Negroes who fought and worked during the war, taught their children what their own parents had not taught them—that they were inferior to no one and had the same rights as any American—and now sent them to college to prepare for their equality. Their movement created pandemonium in the whole apparatus of the Southern courts—local courts, appeals courts, federal courts contradicted each other right and left, often in the presence of hundreds of Negroes who jammed the courtrooms. As the movement enlisted support and participation from thousands of white students on Southern and Northern campuses, pandemonium also began to be created in the relations of these youths to their parents. In 1961 the movement took on national scope with mixed groups of Freedom Riders converging on Deep South cities from both North and South.

Negro youth employed the non-violent tactics that had been evolved by Martin Luther King in the Montgomery boycott. These tactics were extremely effective insofar as they enabled the youth to take the initiative in a disciplined manner, achieve cooperation between white and Negro youth, and dramatize the realities of Southern justice. But the white mobs in the South responded with violence, and it was these mobs who were upheld by the Southern authorities as they restored order by hosing the students, throwing tear gas at them, arresting and jailing them, convicting them of breaking the law, and fining or imprisoning them.

Meanwhile another road was being worked out by Negro workers, both in the North and in the South. In Monroe, North Carolina, the Negro community, under the leadership of Robert F. Williams, an ex-marine and former auto worker, armed itself to meet Ku Klux Klan violence with violence. In the big cities of the North—Chicago, Detroit, Harlem, Los Angeles—the Black Muslims began to consolidate and multiply, attracting to their ranks hundreds of thousands of the lowest

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layers of Negro workers—domestic servants, the unemployed made expendable by automation, and outcasts from society in the prisons and hospitals. Through the militant black nationalist philosophy of the Muslims, these Negroes are now being rehabilitated and their social personalities liberated, *but not for integration into this society.* The Black Muslims, whose membership consists only of Afro-Americans, emphasize the need for American Negroes to follow the example of the Africans. According to their philosophy, white society is doomed and the only hope for the black man is to cut himself off entirely from this doomed society, develop a citizenship of his own, taking for himself the "40 acres" promised but never given him after the Civil War, and preparing himself to defend his people against all white injustice and aggression.

With the growth of the Black Muslim movement and the emergence of the new Negroes in the South represented by the students and the Monroe community, the old Negro organizations like the NAACP have become a joke. NAACP, as Dick Gregory says, means *N*egroes who *A*re not *A*cting like *C*olored *P*eople. Whites who protest "But I belong to the NAACP," are laughed at for deluding themselves that they have thereby bought insurance against the coming explosions. Like the union, the NAACP at this stage of the struggle has been by-passed by harsh realities.

Antagonisms among Negroes themselves have grown as debate and disagreement have sharpened over methods of struggle; Negroes have begun to realize that they will also have to fight Negroes before they win their freedom. Not only that. Inside the CIO, which built its reputation on the solidarity of the workers, there has sprung up a new organization of Negro workers who have made it clear that when the Negro masses explode, the labor organizations cannot expect Negro unionists to defend labor against the Negroes, for labor itself has proved to be too much a part of the American Way of Life which has to be uprooted. Thus, at this point in American history when the labor movement is on the decline, the Negro movement is on the upsurge. The fact has to be faced that since 1955 the development and momentum of the Negro struggle have made the Negroes the one revolutionary force dominating the Ameri-

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can scene. Today the whole nation and the world are aware of their striking force, from boycotts to sit-ins to wade-ins to Freedom Rides. Inside the United States there is widespread fear of the growing strength of the Black Muslims, described by Martin Luther King as the "extremist elements lurking in the wings." In the last half dozen years hundreds of organizations for Negro struggle have sprung up around specific issues, disbanding as speedily as they were formed when their objectives are achieved, and organizing anew when new problems require action. Among these, and growing in significance every day, are the parents' organizations in Northern cities which, through the issue of school redistricting, are challenging the whole social pattern of city and suburb, and of government of the black central city areas by white "absentee landlords," that has grown up since the war.

All this poses very fundamental questions not only for American society as a whole but for American revolutionaries. The old slogan "Black and White, Unite and Fight" has been proved false and obsolete, and the same is now happening to the assumption that Negroes can achieve their rights inside *this* society or without shaking up and revolutionizing the whole social structure. What is involved is not only the likelihood of open and armed revolt of the Negroes against the state power in the South. The Negroes are now posing before all the institutions of American society, and particularly those which are supposedly on their side (the labor organizations, the liberals, the old Negro organizations, and the Marxists), the same questions that have been posed by the Algerian Revolution to all of French society, with this difference that Algeria is outside France while the Negroes are right here inside America. But in the same way that, during the course of the Algerian Revolution, Algerians fought Frenchmen, and Algerians fought Algerians, and Frenchmen representing the national government eventually had to fight Frenchmen in Algeria, and the Algerians had to take over political power and now have to expropriate the property of Frenchmen—so in the United States the Negro revolt will lead to armed struggle between Negroes and whites, Negroes and Negroes, and Federal troops and armed civilians, and will have to move to political power and economic power.

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Already clashes between Federal troops and white civilians have been narrowly averted. The counter-revolution in the South may not yet be as well organized as the Secret Army Organization was in Algeria and France, but the attitudes, actions, and atrocities perpetrated by white civilians against Negroes are no different.

American Marxists have tended to fall into the trap of thinking of the Negroes as Negroes, i.e. in race terms, when in fact the Negroes have been and are today the most oppressed and submerged sections of the workers, on whom has fallen most sharply the burden of unemployment due to automation. The Negroes have more economic grievances than any other section of American society. But in a country with the material abundance of the United States, economic grievances alone could not impart to their struggles all their revolutionary impact. The strength of the Negro cause and its power to shake up the social structure of the nation comes from the fact that in the Negro struggle all the questions of human rights and human relationships are posed. At the same time the American Negroes are most conscious of, and best able to time their actions in relation to, the crises and weaknesses of American capitalism, both at home and abroad.

American Marxists have also allowed themselves to fall into the trap of treating the question of violence and non-violence in the Negro struggle in a way that they would never dream of in relation to the class struggle. That is, they have toyed with the idea that the Negroes are a minority who might be massacred if they used other than non-violent methods. This is because American Marxists have always thought of the working class as white and have themselves discriminated against Negroes by hesitating to recognize them as workers.

Now they must face the fact that the Negro struggle in the United States is not just a race struggle. It is not something apart from and long antedating the final struggle for a classless society which is supposed to take place at some future time when American capitalist society is in total crisis.

The goal of the classless society is precisely what has been and is today at the heart of the Negro struggle. It is the Negroes who represent the revolutionary struggle for a class-

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less society—not indeed the classless society of American folklore in which every individual is supposed to be able to climb to the top in order to exploit newcomers at the bottom. Every other section of the working class has been to one extent or another assimilated into this American Way of Life. Only the Negroes have been excluded from it and continue to be excluded from it, despite the frantic efforts of Kennedy & Co. to incorporate a chosen few Negroes at the top. It is this exclusion which has given the Negro struggle for a classless society its distinctive revolutionary character. For when the Negroes struggle for a classless society, they struggle that all men may be equal, in production, in consumption, in the community, in the courts, in the schools, in the universities, in transportation, in social activity, in government, and indeed in every sphere of American life.

American Marxists have never been able to grasp this because they have always thought that the social revolution in America must be led by white workers. They have also been afraid that if Negroes started violent revolutionary action, they would find the white workers lined up against them. Even when the Marxists have verbally repudiated the theory of "Black and White, Unite and Fight" this theory and these fears about Negro revolt have remained with them. But the crisis in the United States today and the corresponding momentum of the Negro struggle are such that it is obvious that Negroes are not going to consult whites, workers or not workers, before taking action. They will go their way, doing what they think they must do, taking what actions they feel they must take, and forcing the whites to make up their minds whether, when, and if they are coming along.

The chief need for all Americans is to recognize these facts and to be ready to take bold action along with Negroes, recognizing that the Negroes are the growing revolutionary force in the country, and that just as capitalist production has created new methods of production and new layers of workers, it has also produced new Negroes.

Many, including some Negroes, will say that they do not understand just what the Negroes are fighting for in this period. That is primarily because the Negro struggle, as an offensive

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social struggle, is only about eight years old. In those eight years the Negroes have been evolving their own strategy and tactics, not trying to fit into any preconceived pattern, using each and every method, non-violent resistance, violent resistance, moral suasion, economic boycotts, sit-ins, stand-ins, etc., sometimes confusing but more often clarifying the nature of the coming showdown.

Today, as a result of all these struggles, they are learning that their chief weakness is the lack of political power. They do not control one sheriff in the United States, North or South. They have no say about Federal troops, National Guards, city police, FBI, Interstate Commerce Commission, post office authorities, school boards, voting registration, employment commissions. Yet in every issue and in every sphere, and whatever methods they have used, they have found themselves directly up against the corrupt powers-that-be.

Up to now it has been unnatural for the Negroes to think in terms of black political power. Instead they have thought in terms of investing white politicians with power and then putting pressure on them to deal out justice to the Negroes. Now, to Negroes in the South, it is becoming clearly a question of investing blacks with power, and nobody knows this better than the whites who openly admit their fears that this is the inevitable result of Negro voting.

The struggle for black political power is a revolutionary struggle because, unlike the struggle for white power, it is the climax of a ceaseless struggle on the part of Negroes for human rights. Moreover, it comes in a period in the United States when the struggle for human relations rather than for material goods has become the chief task of human beings. The tragedy is that all Americans cannot recognize this and join in this struggle. But the very fact that most white Americans do not recognize it and are in fact opposed to it is what makes it a revolutionary struggle. Because it takes two sides to struggle, the revolution and the counter-revolution.

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CHAPTER 8

The American Revolution

Any social movement starts with the aim of achieving some rights heretofore denied. Sometimes a portion of these rights is achieved without a change in the social structure of the country. When this happens, the movement is not revolutionary, even though it has brought about social change. Such a movement was the CIO. At other times a movement is unable to achieve the rights it seeks without taking power from the existing government and creating a totally new order. When this happens, it is a revolution.

Very few revolutions start with a conscious attempt to take power. No revolution has ever started with everyone in the country agreeing with the goal of the revolutionary movement. It is clashes, both ideological and physical, among segments of the population and usually the whip of the counter-revolution which give the revolution its momentum. Sometimes the revolution is violent, sometimes it is non-violent, but always it is the revolution. Sometimes those in the revolution are conscious of the consequences of their actions, sometimes they are not, but always there is action.

Who will and who will not start a full-scale revolution cannot be foretold. The basis for a revolution is created when the organic structure and conditions within a given country have aroused mass concern. Sometimes the revolution is started by its opponents who by some act arouse the masses to anger and action. Sometimes a very marked improvement in living conditions inculcates in the masses a belief that there is no limit to what they should or can have. Sometimes it is just seeing one segment of the population living so much better than the rest.

No one has ever been able to predict which class or race would start a revolution or how many people would be re-

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quired to do it. The only certainty is that the success of a revolution depends on the joining in of the working people who make up the bulk of the population.

Marx's theory of revolution was developed in relation to the advanced capitalist countries. The United States is the most advanced capitalist country in the world. Not only that. It is the citadel of world capitalism without which the other capitalist countries could not survive. Therefore any revolutionary who evades facing the specific conditions and realities of American capitalism is like the British workers in Marx's day who were so preoccupied with keeping the Irish workers down that they couldn't fight for their own advancement, or all the American socialists who have been so preoccupied with Stalinism, either pro or con, that they have not sought or been able to find the basis of the revolution that is here, right in front of their eyes, in the most advanced capitalist country in the world. American socialists have never been able to understand why there should be a revolution in the United States when there is such an abundance of commodities in this country. Rather than face this question squarely, they have become refugees in theory, if not in physical fact, from the American Revolution.

Preoccupied, while still living in America, with how revolutionary regimes live up to or fall short of their socialist ideals, American revolutionaries have failed to understand the problems actually faced by these regimes after they come to power. They have not understood the nature of the problem of accumulating capital enough for industrialization, and that the burden of this accumulation must be placed on the backs of the workers—just as it was in all capitalist countries, and especially on the backs of Negro workers in the United States—unless they can get the needed capital from already developed countries like the United States. But the United States will share its resources with the underdeveloped countries only if there is a social revolution in the United States. Which brings us right back to the question of the American Revolution.

The American Revolution does not necessarily have to start from economic grievances. Nor does it have to start with the American working class in the lead. The development of capitalism in the United States has generated more than enough

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contradictions to pose the question of the total social reorganization of the country. Some of these contradictions relate to sheer poverty and the workers' life in production. Others are just as important and have even wider bearing on the quality of social existence. Man is imaginative and creative. His needs go far beyond the realm of the material.

What is man's greatest human need in the United States today? It is to stop shirking responsibility and start assuming responsibility. When Americans stop doing the one and start doing the other, they will begin to travel the revolutionary road. But to do this they must use as much creative imagination in politics as up to now they have used in production. The fact is that the more imaginative Americans have been in creating new techniques of production, the less imaginative they have been in creating new relations between people. Americans today are like a bunch of ants who have been struggling all summer long to accumulate a harvest and then can't decide how to distribute it and therefore fight among themselves and destroy each other to get at the accumulation.

The greatest obstacle in the way of the American people beginning to behave like human beings rather than like animals is the great American illusion of freedom.

Stop an American and begin to make some serious criticisms of our society, and nine times out of ten his final defense will be: "But this is the freest and finest country in the world." When you probe into what he means by this, it turns out that what he is really talking about is the material goods that he can acquire in exchange for his birthright of political freedom. That is, he is free to have an automobile, a TV, a hi-fi, and all kinds of food, clothing, and drink as long as he doesn't offend anybody he works for or anybody in an official capacity, and as long as he doesn't challenge the accepted pattern of racial, economic, and political relations inside the country or its foreign policy outside. On these questions most Americans absolve themselves from any responsibility by saying that all that is "politics" and "I am not interested in politics." What they really mean is that they are afraid to assume political responsibility because it would mean jeopardizing their economic and social status. No people in the world have more to say

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about the lack of free speech in Russia, China, Cuba, and Ghana. The reason is that as long as they have these other places to talk about, they can evade facing the silent police state that has grown up inside America. If you casually mention the police state to an American, the first thing that comes to his mind is some other country. He doesn't see his own police state.

That is because in the United States, more than in any other country in the world, every man is a policeman over himself, a prisoner of his own fears. He is afraid to think because he is afraid of what his neighbors might think of what he thinks if they found out what he was thinking, or what his boss might think, or what the police might think, or the FBI, or the CIA. And all because he thinks he has a lot to lose. He thinks he has to choose between material goods and political freedom. And when the two are counterposed, Americans today will choose material goods. Believing they have much to lose, Americans find excuses where there are no excuses, evade issues before the issues arise, shun situations and conversations which could lead to conflict, leave politics and political decisions to the politicians. They will not regain their membership in the human race until they recognize that their greatest need is no longer to make material goods but to make politics.

But politics today in the United States is not just ordinary politics made by ordinary politicans. Not since the 30's and the era of Franklin D. Roosevelt has there been political statesmanship in the United States. Roosevelt's problems and therefore his responsibilities, as he made very clear in his First Inaugural Address, were extraordinary. But Roosevelt's problems were largely domestic. Today, in contrast, every issue, no matter how local or domestic it may seem, has international repercussions inherent in it from the very beginning.

In President Eisenhower's Farewell Address, he warned the people of the growing power of the "military-industrial complex" inside the country. Ike was speaking mainly of the actual military power and personnel. He did not go into the way this apparatus has been intertwined with those who control the economic processes of the country and with the various investigating agencies which at every level control the thought

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processes of the population. All together, these now constitute a military-economic-police bloc which was not elected by the people and cannot be held responsible to the people but which makes all the decisions controlling the life of the people.

This bloc has its present power because the United States actually does have its back to the wall both domestically and internationally. Domestically, it is dependent upon the war economy for economic survival as a capitalist country, and has been so dependent since the Great Depression of the 30's. Internationally, it is dependent upon the military for protection against the world revolutionary movement that is arising among the have-not peoples of the world, and has been so dependent since the 1949 Revolution in China and the Korean War. The United States has lost all the spiritual power which underlies political power of a peaceful kind.

It is the refusal of the American people to face this situation openly and to assume responsibility for tackling it uncompromisingly that gives the military-economic-police bloc its strength. If the secret police were not so secret and silent, it would be much easier to fight. An open enemy is the best enemy. But the fear of the American people of clashing openly with this bloc adds strength to it.

Most secret of all is the CIA, which even members of Congress do not dare question. Yet the CIA has the power to go into a country, organize a war or a revolution or a counter-revolution, recruit among the American people for its schemes; it has the funds and the staff at its disposal to fight an underground war not only against the Russians but against every country in the world.

The FBI is the secret police force closest to the lives of the people. Unlike the FBI of the 30's which used to be hailed as the great protector of the people against the criminal elements, the FBI today functions chiefly as a political police to pry into the private lives and thoughts of every American.

What the FBI does in complete secrecy, the House Un-American Activities Committee does in semi-secrecy, having the power to drag before it any individual or group which actively challenges the status quo in this country. In this way it dangles over all whom it queries the kind of public suspicion

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and silent condemnation from which there is only one way for the individual to escape—to prove his or her loyalty to the police state by becoming an informer for it.

If the leap that the American people have to take in order to meet the problems of this new age of abundance were not so great, the powers of the secret police would likewise not be so great. In the 30's the problems were relatively simple. All that was required was that the poor struggle against the rich, who were the capitalists and whose failure was clear and obvious.

Today in the 60's, the struggle is much more difficult. What it requires is that people in every stratum of the population clash not only with the agents of the silent police state but with their own prejudices, their own outmoded ideas, their own fears which keep them from grappling with the new realities of our age. The American people must find a way to insist upon their own right and responsibility to make political decisions and to determine policy in all spheres of social existence—whether it is foreign policy, the work process, education, race relations, community life. The coming struggle is a political struggle to take political power out of the hands of the few and put it into the hands of the many. But in order to get this power into the hands of the many, it will be necessary for the many not only to fight the powerful few but to fight and clash among themselves as well.

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About the Author

James Boggs, born in Marion Junction, Alabama, forty-four years ago, never dreamed of becoming President or a locomotive engineer. He grew up in a world where the white folks are gentlemen by day and Ku Klux Klanners at night. Marion Junction is in Dallas County where even today, although Negroes make up over 57 percent of the total county population of 57,000, only 130 Negroes are registered voters.

After graduating from Dunbar High School in Bessemer, Alabama, in 1937, Boggs took the first train North, bumming his way through the Western part of the country, working in the hop fields of the state of Washington, cutting ice in Minnesota, and finally ending up in Detroit where he worked on the WPA until the Second World War gave him a chance to enter the auto plants. He has been an auto worker ever since and a rebel for as long as he can remember.

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Notes on MR PRESS

Monthly Review Press publishes books and pamphlets in the fields of history, economics, politics, and world affairs; it publishes also the magazine MONTHLY REVIEW which analyzes world events from an independent socialist point of view.

Founded in 1949, MONTHLY REVIEW has steadily increased its circulation among economists, historians, political scientists, government officials, businessmen, and libraries. On April 13, 1963, *Business Week,* the leading business journal in the United States, ran a seven-column spread on the magazine and its editors. *Business Week's* esteem for MONTHLY REVIEW is shared by the Department of Economics of Wellesley College which described it in the *Wellesley Alumnae Magazine,* of July, 1962, as the "leading Marxist intellectual (not Communist) economic journal published anywhere in the world, and it is on our subscription list at the College library for good reasons."

MONTHLY REVIEW is on the subscription list of the leading college and public libraries in the country. Its subscription renewal rate by economists, historians, political scientists, and government officials is extraordinarily high—perhaps as high as that of any magazine in the country.

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(*continued from inside front cover*)

jobs" and that this "makes the Negro problem part of a generalized national problem." And he asks: "Is the rising discontent which is showing itself among the 20 million Negroes going to change in important ways the shape and pace of American politics? . . . Does the crystal ball . . . show that there will be a new popular movement of internal development and reform—without which the substantial grievances of Negroes cannot be redressed?"

Yes, the Negro struggle means that, and it means much more too. How much more no one has understood better or stated more boldly than James Boggs in his book which makes up this issue of MR.

Because of both its great timeliness and the challenging nature of its message, we think this is an ideal issue with which to introduce new readers to MR. We will do our best to call it to the attention of people who have not yet made the acquaintance of the magazine, but there is no doubt that you can do much more than we can along this line. May we earnestly ask your cooperation in lending your issue around—e.g., to new friends acquired on vacation—discussing it, urging those who show an interest to subscribe. We plan to devote increasing attention to the Negro struggle in the months and years ahead: convince your friends and acquaintances that they can't afford to be without MR.

One of our favorite letters of recent weeks comes from a member of the U.S. Air Force stationed at a base in the Southwest. "I subscribe to several liberal publications," writes our correspondent, "but since I have found MR, I intend to let them all expire. It makes them superfluous for two reasons: MR gives the complete background of the issues of the day, and places them in historical perspective, while the others deem it sufficient merely to castigate; and you have a singular capacity to retain a balanced judgment in the midst of controversy." Our thanks to the writer and apologies to our contemporaries who have lost a subscriber.

MONTHLY REVIEW will be well represented this season at World Fellowship in New Hampshire. Scott Nearing will be there to give a series of talks during the week of July 8-13. Bob Harris, a recent Antioch graduate who has been on the MR staff since last September, will be helping with the program during the first two weeks of July. Director Willard Uphaus asks us to announce that MR readers wishing to learn further details of the summer program should write to World Fellowship, Conway, N.H.

The next issue of MR will come to you in September. In the meantime, we wish you all a happy vacation.

TO THOSE READERS WHO ARE GETTING TO KNOW MR FOR THE FIRST TIME WITH THIS ISSUE—

* The magazine was founded in 1949 with the help of a three-year grant from the late F. O. Matthiessen, Professor of History and Literature at Harvard.
* The circulation has grown twentyfold since Vol. 1, No. 1.
* MR reaches leading socialists all over the world.
* The Department of Economics at Wellesley College has called MR the "leading Marxist intellectual (non-Communist) economic journal published anywhere in the world."
* Let MR be your guide as to why and how the world is going socialist!

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